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The Confucian Moral World Order in Chinese State Identity.

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Semantic messes are never just accidents.
They are usually slips of the collective unconscious.
(Lemert, 1991, p. 166)

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1. Abstract

Contemporary international relations theory seem at a cross-roads, either accepting the inclusion of non-Western models of international relations or assuming that the Westphalian model has evolved into what is now a generally valid world system with regional peculiarities. In the first case, decline in the Western understanding of the state as the sacrosanct unit actor revives fears of a clash of civilisations and a “rebeginning of history”. In the latter, global politics are to continue without much change except in the balance of power. This paper has tried to fill a void in these discussions by questioning the basic assumption of the state systems. Why are they “felt” as “natural”?

To answer this question, the paper has looked at what lies at the core of nation states by looking at what seems to be their opposite, empire, not necessarily as a superstate but rather the structure beyond the nation state or “national” administration. Post-Marxian scholars of ideology have exposed how the universalistic appeal of these structures give imperial designs of single power centres within state systems a sense of natural legitimacy or innate justness of the system, of its values and of the central power base by projecting a certain vision of a universal future into the collective imaginary, be it the Christian *communitas*, the Muslim *dar as-Salam*, the Confucian *datong*. In trying to understand this natural legitimacy of a political structure, this paper looked at understandings of ideology from Destutt de Tracy to Bourdieu’s social capital, Castoriadis’ social imaginary to contemporary debate. It then looked at research on imperial designs, definitions and typologies, attempting a conceptualisation of the imperial imaginary. It then looked at the origins of the

Confucian imperial imaginary and followed its evolution until today. It attempted to show continuities in the perception of the world system and the role China proper plays within that system.

It proved Feuerwerker's assumption that "geographical and economic-demographic capabilities do not autonomously determine any policy for the leaders of the Chinese state. For these parameters to have any effect, they must be mediated by the implicit or explicit decisions of specific policymakers who, in effect, assign them their values. (Feuerwerker, 1972, p. 3)." Looking at key intellectuals in contemporary foreign policy discourse, this paper exposed continuities and explained through its analytical framework of ideological empire how these continuities persist and perpetuate even in at a moment in which these continuities are still generally denied as relics of a shedded past or used in disguise. It sheds light into the discrepancies between discourse and practise in Chinese foreign policy, domestic expectations on foreign policy actors' discourse and behaviour.

Much is being said about the determinants of Chinese foreign policy, few works have looked beyond the convenient classical frameworks. This is one, however possibly misguided attempt, to put imperial designs at the centre of IR debate.

2. Preface

Professor Wang Gung-wu asked in a recent speech,

What kind of China is now rising? Will it be a nation-state that will emulate the national empires that dominated the 19th and 20th centuries? Will it be a regional hegemon? Or will it be, as the Chinese authorities today promise, a benign and peace-loving multinational state that would exercise influence not as any kind of empire but follow whatever is the modern equivalent of *tianxia*? (Wang, 2006, p. 13)

Zeng Xianghong, a Chinese international relations scholar, replied,

„和谐社会 “理想是中国人在对国际局势进行判断的基础上，利用中国传统思想资源对全球发展态势所做的一种展望，意味着中国提出了一种崭新的世界秩序方案。 (Zeng, 2010, p. 2)

“The ideal of a ‘harmonious society’ is the basis of a judgement the Chinese people make towards the international situation, it applies resources from traditional Chinese thought to express a certain aspiration towards the direction of global development, it means that China has proposed a new world order.”

This thesis is attempting to take two theoretical tools, the concept of the imaginary and the concept of empire, out of their politicised use in contemporary social theory and through them look at the recurring role of the Confucian world order in Chinese political discourse.

This study attempts to give politological impetus to the vital necessity of understanding the native discourse rationale in the politics of a global superpower on the rise and provides a tentative response to Wang Gung-wu's question on how to read Chinese growing influence in the world not only based on its rational, pragmatic foreign policy, but much more importantly on how world politics fit into the imaginary role the Chinese state plays towards its citizens and the values it claims to represent.

Wang Gung-wu concluded that,

The new Chinese elites may recognise that, beyond the nation-state, there are new, fresh and vibrant values of universal validity that could be accepted and used to support, restore and even enhance those that their ancestors had espoused. (Wang, 2006, p. 15)

I have been writing on thesis for five years, in Vienna, Cairo, Hong Kong and different parts of China, but mostly in Beijing. In these five years, as a visiting student at Peking University and a civil servant for the Austrian ministries of defence and foreign affairs in China, I have had the privilege to question my thesis' assumptions with conversations with leading intellectuals, dissidents and politicians shaping China's future foreign policy discourse, more or less consciously. When I set out to write this thesis, I began looking at how China used Confucian "moral" discourse in its relations to the Arab world. I originally had hoped to include the discourse from the other side, how Islamist and Panarab "moral" discourse shaped Arab relations to China, e.g. in Xinjiang or Tang dynasty trade settlements in coastal Fujian. I have come to see that the universality of "moral" assertions is rarely questioned anywhere, be that in Vienna, Cairo or Beijing, and especially so within

the academic élite of the authoriarian state the People's Republic is, where an academic career depends most of the time on the appropriation and development of political theory with the purpose of affirming state legitimacy. This thesis uses and questions a Western analytical framework for lack of a Chinese alternative, highlights the continuity in this process of reaffirmation of state legitimacy within the Confucian political imaginary.

The translations in this thesis are, if not differently noted, my own. I have made an effort to include the Chinese text, classic and contemporary, in simplified characters in order to enrich reading for those who read Chinese. In some cases, I resort to the transcribing Chinese text according to the *pinyin* transcription system commonly used in the People's Republic of China and increasingly around the world. The *pinyin* transcriptions serve to highlight continuities in discourse for non-Chinese readers.

The classical Chinese texts are taken from the Chinese Text Project (www.ctext.org), an immensely valuable online database of pre-Modern Chinese texts.

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Professor Dr Richard Trappl, director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Vienna, Major General Heinrich Winkelmayer, former Austrian Defence Attaché to China and Japan, and Dr Martin Sajdik, then Austrian ambassador to China, Mongolia and the DPRK, have been generous teachers to me. Their professionalism has inspired my vision on life. I would like to extend my thanks to Ms Andrea Graf-Langheinz from the Institute of Human and Social Sciences of the National Academy of Defence of the Austrian Armed Forces as well as my superior at the National Academy of Defence Warrant Officer Robert Niklos for their sustained support. I am most grateful to Nadia Sbahi and André Holthe for their valuable and critical proofreading and Christian Vogel for vitally helping with administrative hassles. Several friends have inspired me with their praise and criticism, their example and their loyalty. Without them I wouldn't have been able to finish this doctoral thesis: most of all Samanawan Tanakkasarenee, but also Amir Tewfik Hanna,

Bernhard Fischer, Christian Kräutler, Fabiola Cutrufo, Fritz Pokorny, Hannes Schluchtmann, Jakob Redl, Marcel Austin-Martin, Oskar Bull-Hansen, René Madlener, Samuel Summer and Thomas Eder.

Thank you.

4. A Conceptual History of Ideology

4.1. Discovery of Ideology by Baron Destutt de Tracy

The person who is generally credited for coining the term “ideology” is Baron Antoine Destutt de Tracy. Destutt de Tracy, a French aristocrat turned revolutionary in the wake of the French Revolution, continued a line of thought commenced by Condillac, Locke and, as Hans Barth traced back, Francis Bacon. (Barth, 1976, p. 3) The French *ideologue*-aristocrat followed Condillac in the attempt to include human “idea” into a positivist, enlightened scientific recording of universal validity. Destutt de Tracy adopted Locke's reasoning that the human mind can be observed and described like a natural object and, curiously but consistently, places his “new science”, which he calls ideology, into the sphere of zoology. Attempting to understand the origin and anatomy of the basic moral conceptualizations of things. Destutt de Tracy was looking for a science of ideas or in his words:

I of necessity looked back on the ancient history of the science, to show, that true logic is absolutely the same science with that of the formation, the expression, and combination of our ideas; that is to say, that which has been since called Ideology, general grammar, or analysis of the understanding. (Destutt de Tracy, 1973, p. 1)

He based his search for the science of ideas, i.e. Ideology, rather naively on “the observation of two facts, which result manifestly from the scrupulous observation of our intellectual operations” (Destutt de Tracy, 1973, p. 2), namely that firstly perceptions are identical with sensations and secondly and consequentially

judgements cannot be erroneous by themselves. Their falsity can only be asserted in context with preceding judgements. Basing himself on these two assumptions, Destutt de Tracy assumes that through critical, scientific analysis of these judgements or ideas an *ideologue* would arrive at what he calls “first truths”, basic principles that serve as premise to the whole spectrum of ideas. Ideas should be reduced to their constitutive sensations. These cannot be false, only their contextualisation can be false. Through this process of exposing the source of error, i.e. not the idea itself but its contextualization, in order to unmask false reasoning resembles Francis Bacon's classic theory of the idols (Barth, 1976, p. 3) and inadvertently foreshadows the Marxist detection of “false consciousness”. Destutt de Tracy, however, does not dig that much into the question of falsification of reasoning or even subsequent questioning of *Weltanschauungen*, worldviews, as a whole. What Destutt de Tracy was looking for was a mere zoology of man that understands the basic functioning of the production, reproduction and competition of ideas and arrive through this epistemological enterprise to conclusions of scientific value on the eternally true basic human sensation and its falsifiable products, i.e. ideas. By exposing false reasoning these scientific conclusions should be normative for the establishment of a new, enlightened and elevated society.

The claim of normativity of his Ideology can only be understood by looking at the institutional background he comes from. From 1797 Destutt de Tracy worked at the Section of Analysis of Sensations and Ideas at the Moral and Political Sciences division of the *Institut National* in Paris on the early years of the French Revolution. The *Institut National* essentially was a group of scientists and philosophers aiming at providing a theoretical framework for the societal reconstruction after the revolution

brought down the *ancien régime*. Napoleon Bonaparte himself was member of the *Institut National* and supported its work in the earlier stages of his imperial aspirations. He even claimed to have invented the term “*ideologue*” himself (Eagleton, 2007, p. 67). The *Institut National* supported Napoleon's *coup d'état* on the 18th Brumaire, 1799 and Destutt de Tracy was made Consul, but then soon experienced first-hand a change in the legitimising discourse of the new *Empire*. Napoleon turned away from his old supporters, the revolutionary, enlightened aristocrats looking for a sombre truth in science and turned to the old tune of *grandeur* by the grace of god, a thinly veiled return to the *ancien régime* discourse. There he found a consolidated system of legitimizing beliefs, the dominant ideology in Gramsci's terms that suited and gladly perpetuated his claims to power. Despite the turning tide, Destutt de Tracy began publishing his *Projet d'éléments d'idéologie* in 1801. Two years later the Moral and Political Sciences division was abolished by a decree, which directly condemned the ideologues of political effectiveness. Destutt de Tracy and his ideologues attempted scientific exploration of a reason in human sensation directly went against a new wave of religiosity and the mystical in the first years of the new century. Not much time had passed until the “Babel of reason” received general incrimination and Destutt de Tracy's aim to institute Ideology as a subject to be taught at the *écoles centrales* was never to be realized. (Barth, 1976, p. 11)

In 1812 Napoleon condemned the *ideologues*:

It is to the doctrine of the ideologues - this this diffuse metaphysics, which in a contrived manner seeks to find the primary causes and on this foundation would erect the legislation of peoples, instead of adapting the laws to a knowledge of the human heart and of the lessons of history - to which one

must attribute all the misfortunes which have befallen our beloved France.

(Eagleton, 2007, p. 68)

Napoleon accused the *idéologues* of being too “scientific”, to neglect the apparently irrational but instinctively right “knowledge of the human heart”. In terms of the conventional contemporary understanding of the term ideology, Napoleon accused the *idéologues* of not being ideological.

Despite imperial censure, Destutt de Tracy continued to work on a second volume of his *Eléments d'Idéologie* in which he adopted a more materialistic approach towards reasoning and thus prepares the ground for a nexus between the Marxian concept of ideology and its theorem of fetishism. Destutt de Tracy was held in regards by Thomas Jefferson, who translated *Eléments d'Idéologie* into English in 1817 (*Ideals and Ideologies*, 1999, p. 4) and had him elected to the American Philosophical Society. Karl Marx, who according to Emmet Kennedy most probably had only read the second volume of the *Eléments* on economics, accused the aristocrat-*idéologue* of being a “cold-blooded bourgeois-doctrinaire”.¹ (Eagleton, 2007, p. 69) It seems as though the *philosophe* of the French enlightenment, who tried to introduce scientific method into the analysis of human consciousness has been grossly misunderstood by his contemporaries, be that on grounds of an arguably deficient line of reasoning or on grounds of political opportunism. There is no doubt to the fact, as pointed out by Eagleton, that through excessive rationalism the “science of ideas” has shifted from “denoting a sceptical scientific materialism to signifying a sphere of abstract, disconnected ideas; and it is this meaning of the word which will then be taken up by Marx and Engels”. (Eagleton, 2007, p. 70)

¹ Barth claims that Marx in fact was familiar with the fundamentals of Destutt de Tracy's work on ideology. (Barth, 1976, p. 48)

4.2. Ideology in Marx and Engels

For roughly a quarter of a century, from the publication of Destutt de Tracy's *Eléments* to the publication of *Die Deutsche Ideologie* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1846/47 there will be no comprehensive attempt to re-conceptualize ideology, nonetheless the term remains in usage, yet oscillating between the meaning given to it by Destutt de Tracy and the derogatory usage by Napoleon. Hegel defines Ideology as the "reduction of thought to sensation", Schopenhauer equated the ideological method with Kantian transcendentalism. For Franz von Baader the *idéologues* embodied "the spirit of irreligion", he accused them of "pretending to have discovered the art of manufacturing [ideas]". (Barth, 1976, p. 15)

The term ideology will be given a new meaning in the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

György Márkus in his study on *Concepts of Ideology in Marx* stresses that whereas Marx's theory of ideology is one of his major contributions to social theory and philosophy, he "never intended nor claimed to create a systematic theory of ideology." But, he concedes, "the heterogeneous and mostly critical uses he made of this concept can be seen in retrospect to have enclosed a definite field of investigation and to have suggested/outlined an essentially unified theoretical approach to this field." (Markus, 1991, p. 101)

Ideology does not anymore denote Destutt de Tracy's science of ideas, but rather an abstract but vital function that serves to perpetuate an existing class system by providing a veil of universal validity to otherwise questionable elements of the very

system. Marx expressively depicts the force of such ideology in “The Eighteenth Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte”:

Die Menschen machen ihre eigene Geschichte, aber sie machen sie nicht aus freien Stücken, nicht unter selbstgewählten, sondern unter unmittelbar vorgefundenen, gegebenen Umständen. Die Tradition aller toten Geschlechter lastet wie ein Alp auf dem Gehirne der Lebenden. Und wenn sie eben damit beschäftigt scheinen, sich und die Dinge umzuwälzen, noch nicht Dagewesenes zu schaffen, gerade in solchen Epochen revolutionärer Krise beschwören sie ängstlich die Geister der Vergangenheit zu ihrem Dienste herauf, entlehnen ihnen Namen, Schlachtparole, Kostüm, um in dieser altehrwürdigen Verkleidung und mit dieser erborgten Sprache die neue Weltgeschichtsszene aufzuführen. (Marx, 1967, p. 15)

In the beginning to his account of the events leading to the rise of Napoleon III, Marx defines ideology in a way that will be the core of Marxist and post-Marxist analyses of ideology from Althusser to Castoriadis. The defining elements of ideology, i.e. symbolism, the nature of consciousness, the nexus between consciousness and action, its perpetuating and normative functions will be pillars of subsequent understanding of ideology and will be dealt with as they appear in the development of this Marxist and post-Marxist social theory.

The Marxian term of ideology requires for its understanding a preliminary look at the philosophical antecedents to Marxian thought. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel provided a decisive impetus by asserting that the inability to perceive a thing in itself, limited by the perceptive capacities of the human mind, as postulated by Immanuel Kant, the objective world can but be the self-alienation of the Absolute Subject, *Geist*.

(Tunick, 1992, pp. 12-13) Hegel bases his thought thus on an ultimate deterministic idealism. Feuerbach then went on to suggest that the Hegelian *Geist* can only be an idealistic extrapolation of the essence of “man” himself. (Barth, 1976, p. 55) Marx accepts the epistemological framework while dramatically turning the whole theoretical construct upside down. He and Engels used the metaphor of a “*camera obscura*” (Marx & Engels, 1953, p. 22) to point to the distortion in Hegelian theory as well as - here is the core of Marxian thought in this regard - in the commonplace acceptance of a class system with claims to universal validity. In a *camera obscura* everything is notably turned upside down and thus in Marxian theory the *Geist* is a reflection of material conditions and not vice versa². In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels call ideas, any abstract paradigms of apparent universal validity “nebulous constructs” (*Nebelbildungen*) and state,

Die Moral, Religion, Metaphysik und sonstige Ideologie und die ihnen entsprechenden Bewußtseinsformen behalten hiermit nicht länger den Schein der Selbständigkeit. Sie haben keine Geschichte, sie haben keine Entwicklung, sondern die ihre materielle Produktion und ihren materiellen Verkehr entwickelnden Menschen ändern mit dieser ihrer Wirklichkeit auch ihr Denken und die Produkte ihres Denkens. Nicht das Bewußtsein bestimmt das Leben, sondern das Leben bestimmt das Bewußtsein. (Marx & Engels, 1953, p. 23)

² In *Thesis on Feuerbach* (1845), Marx states that *Feuerbach geht von dem Faktum der religiösen Selbstenfremdung, der Verdoppelung der Welt in eine religiöse und eine weltliche aus. Seine Arbeit besteht darin, die religiöse Welt in ihre weltliche Grundlage aufzulösen. Aber daß die weltliche Grundlage sich von sich selbst erhebt und sich ein selbständiges Reich in den Wolken fixiert, ist nur aus der Selbstzerrissenheit und Sichselbstwidersprechen dieser weltlichen Grundlage zu erklären. Diese selbst muß also in sich selbst sowohl in ihrem Widerspruch verstanden als praktisch revolutioniert werden.* (Marx & Engels, 1953, p. 594)

Life, the objective circumstances, therefore shapes consciousness, the subjective ideas. The course of history determined by the material engine of the economy changes the objective circumstances and consequentially change the subjective ideas. Hawkes stresses that there is a logical error assuming Marx reduces ideas to mere reflections of material conditions, rather he points in dialectical tradition to the interpenetration of opposites. “The poles of the opposition create and define each other, and this fact is revealed in human life, which combines thought and material activity”. (Hawkes, 2003, p. 90) This at first sight insignificant play of words will be crucial for the understanding of the causative function of the imaginary that is a crucial part of ideology in terms of policy.

Furthermore, Marx solves the antecedent philosophical impasse between materialists, who simply condemn idealism as illusionary, and idealists, who claim the contrary, but uniting idea and action into a dialectical unity.

Looking from the perspective of the dialectical unity of idea and action, ideology in Marxian terms must be something at the dialectical interplay between idea and action, consciousness and life. This something must be, according to Marx' statement above, self-reproductive, normative and self-legitimizing. Here Marx turns to the Hegelian concept of “representation”, i.e. the faculty that mediates between the dialectical poles of subjective ideas and objective circumstances. Representation, Marx argues in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* can be deceptive is as much as it, while exerting real and determining influence on how people think and behave, reformulates class interest and economic interest into generally valid interest. Its deceptive symbolism gives evidence to the assumption that “representation is a product of the human brain, and humanity is under constant temptation to idolize

these representations, and treat them as though they were real”. (Hawkes, 2003, p. 94) Ideology therefore is a function within society to legitimize élite class interest by claiming a deceptive universal validity of the limited élite interest and achieving this goal on the level of the formation of consciousness, which in turn, according to Marx, is in dialectical unity with action (or rather “labour”). Therefore, this consciousness reproduces itself through action and action expresses itself through consciousness in a self-legitimising circle.³ It seems thus that Marx’ vision of ideology is essentially negative, ideology is but “a set of chimeras” which perpetuate a social order through this cycle distracting man from otherwise obvious inequality and injustice. Ideology in Marx is “an imaginary resolution of real contradiction”. (Eagleton, 2007, p. 77) Or, in Márkus’ words, it renders “the totality completely opaque, transforming it into a matter of unintelligible naturalness or technical necessity.” (Markus, 1991, p. 92)

Marx’s discovery of these contradictions stems from his early studies on human labour. He claims that whereas labour is the basic expression of human personality and essentially should be free, it has been limited and channelled by oppression and has led to alienation. This alienation is to be seen on four levels: Man is alienated from the activity of labour, the products of one’s labour, from society (as a collective of men alienated from their basic means of expression, i.e. labour) and from nature. Human existence in Marx is therefore alienated from the essence of being man, it is a condition of alienation, which has to be seen in relational terms as servitude. Thus history in Marx is but a history of oppression and continuous dialectics between an oppressive and an oppressed class. He coined this struggle *Klassenkampf*, class struggle.

³ What is called here the symbolism of representation only serves as emphasis to highlight that, firstly, concepts are generally mediated through their relations to other concepts and, secondly, such relations eventually tend to be seen as concepts themselves.

Marx has developed an unbending determined evolution in history. History moves from one stage of societal development to the next, from the slave society until ultimately to communism. Where does ideology come in? Ideology in Marx serves the very purpose stated above, namely to conceal the real contradictions of class oppression by making the worker think that to work sixteen hours a day for a meagre wage is right and the world as it is, not a mere oppression that serves the interest of the oppressing class. This ideology is perpetuated in the collective acceptance of the alienation of labour and the very practice of production within the system of oppression.

Marx therefore has gone far away from Destutt de Tracy's vision of a ideology as a science aiming at liberate the human mind from false reasoning by "scientifically" looking at the truth in human conception to a vision of ideology as the veil of conception that allows for a system of oppression to perpetuate itself.

This deterministic and materialistic view on history therefore is to be seen on two levels of analysis. On the one hand, there is the capitalist system which perpetuates oppression through an ideological veil. This veil can only be overcome by the oppressed class acknowledging the "false consciousness"⁴ it submitted to. On this level, history rolls in cyclic terms of oppression and rebellion within an unchanging class system. On the other hand, there is the big picture of the unfailing certainty of an eventual shift from the capitalist system to the socialist just as the feudal system was replaced by the capitalist. This huge step in history can only be achieved, as said, by the vanquishing of "false consciousness". This allows Márkus to interpret a distinction between two kinds of ideology into Marxian thought. Firstly, "ideologies

⁴ Engels coined the term "false consciousness", the situation in which the workers were unable to grasp the true nature of their interests or their historical role in a letter to Franz Mehring in 1893. The term was not used by Marx (Morrison, 2006, p. 62)

of the historical moment” provide the necessary apparatus of ideas to allow an oppressive system to perpetuate itself. Secondly, “ideologies that represent epochal cultural values” are transcendental and perpetual elements of culture that go beyond the class conflict of the moment. (Markus, 1991, pp. 94, 100) This distinction allows for a further differentiation in “ideological actors”⁵. The ideological strata of the ruling class are attributed for the role of “mere transmitters and propagators of ideas” (Markus, 1991, p. 93) and this definition intuitively seems to suit for representatives of institutions that propose a moral societal system, for instance a religion’s clergy or equally cadres of a Communist Party. Now the distinction between “ideologies of the historical moment” and “ideologies that represent epochal cultural values” allows for personnel of ideological transmission to exist on two levels: the one of the élite legitimizing its specific elements oppression and the one of the broader cultural entity that allows for such a societal context to exist. (Markus, 1991, pp. 92-95)

Marx implicitly concedes - on both levels - a stabilizing function of ideology within society by, in Márkus terms, giving them credit for “[systematizing] the confused and chaotic conceptions of everyday thinking, to lend coherence to their fragmented structure, to explain away (and thereby apologize for) the most widely encountered experiences that contradict the seeming self-evidence of fetishistic categories”. (Markus, 1991, p. 93)⁶

Marx’s concept of ideology, in synthesis, is composed of a philosophical-descriptive element, but equally of a normative element, combining factual propositions with value judgements. The accusation of the German ideology (*Nebelbildung*) eventually

⁵ Destutt de Tracy would call them the complete contrary to his view of an *idéologue*, but Marx lucidly unmask this apparent antithesis.

⁶ This succinct analysis does not allow for a more elaborate analysis of Marxian thought and admits to neglecting the rich elaborations on representation, fetishism and alienation such as in ‘Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts’ *et al.* in order to grasp the essence of his understanding of “ideology”.

turned into an ideology itself, which “expresses an outlook on the world and a will orientated towards the future.” (Aron, 2007, p. 236)

Jorge Larraín identifies two orientations in the continuation of the Marxist concept of ideology. On the one hand, Friedrich Hegel originated an approach, which focuses on the identification of the material basis and its illusory superstructure. Lenin, Plekhanov and Labriola also follow this line. This positivist approach seeks a correct understanding of the determination of knowledge by the economic base. On the other hand, a historicist approach led by Lukács and Gramsci pointed at the theory-practice binary and its temporally dynamic interplay. (Larraín, 1979, p. 68) While Engels follows Marx in arguing that the material processes are the ultimately determining factor in history, he condemns a reduction of all factors to this one single factor as a reductionist enterprise. He equally stresses the validity of dialectics as a framework for understanding the interplay and development of ideologies arguing that the “dialectics of concepts” are but a “conscious reflex of the dialectical motion of the real world”⁷ (Larraín, 1979, p. 70)

4.3. The Ideological Vanguard in Lenin

Vladimir Ilich Lenin brings about a major adjustment to Marxism in regards to ideology. In *What is to be done?*, published in 1902, he refuses the spontaneity of a change away from capitalism. The successful advent of communism has to be brought about by a revolutionary élite, which defines the interest of the proletariat and acts as a “vanguard” for it. While Marx and Engels see ideology as “false

⁷ For an analysis of the dissimilarities between Marx and Engels see (Oishi, 2001)

consciousness” which allows the oppression of the working class, Lenin calls for the very vanguard to lead the proletariat by “socialist ideology”. He states:

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology being developed by the masses of the workers in the process of their movement *the only choice is*: either bourgeois or socialist ideology, (Lenin, 1966, p. 82)

and thereby established a dichotomy between the ideology of the previous stage of development and the next. The leadership of the Communist Party is to analyse the moment in the materialist vision of history and to guide the masses according to the scientifically graspable necessities. In terms of role of the agent of ideology, the ideologists, Lenin has almost returned to Destutt de Tracy’s vision, i.e. a élite corps liberating man from an inherited obscure veil. The crucial point is that the ideologist can now attribute his dominion in real-world policy decisions to the unquestionable determinism of the course of history according to the scientific theory of historical materialism. The transcendental thus returned to defining legitimacy through the back door. Lenin thus involuntarily provided an insight into the legitimizing mechanisms of ideology.

4.4. The Interdependence between Consciousness and Reality in Lukács

Györy Lukács provided two major inputs into the Marxist understanding of ideology with his work *History and Class Consciousness* published in 1923. In this work he elaborates on “reification” as a refinement of Marxian “alienation” and “fetishism”

as well as puts class consciousness to renewed scrutiny, thereby refining the whole Marxist perspective on ideology at the philosophical basis of the concept.

For Lukács the materialist dialectics as outlined by Marx are but a scientific method with revolutionary potential. He looks into the interplay between consciousness and reality that allows for a union between theory and praxis (Lukács, 1978, p. 60). The Marxist Lukács acknowledges that consciousness shapes reality “directly and adequately” as much as this shaping happens vice-versa. (Lukács, 1978, p. 60) The Marxian view of ideology as the veil imposed on consciousness is replaced by a more subtle picture. He states:

Diese ununterbrochene Veränderung der Gegenständlichkeitsformen aller gesellschaftlichen Phänomene in ihrer ununterbrochenen, dialektischen Wechselwirkung aufeinander, die Entstehung der Erkennbarkeit eines Gegenstandes aus seiner Funktion in der bestimmten Totalität, in der er fungiert, macht die dialektische Totalitätsbetrachtung - und sie allein! - fähig, die Wirklichkeit als gesellschaftliches Geschehen zu begreifen. (Lukács, 1978, p. 77)

Lukács explicitly attributes the capacity of really grasping reality to consciousness, be that more or less accurate. Reification serves as a knitting device, which - by making relational definitions (even of the self) seem unrelated “things” - conceals the inconsistencies emerging from this imperfect grasping. Lukács succeeded in describing a sort of circular dynamics between consciousness and reality, allowing for a focus on the different kinds of class consciousness within this totality and, eventually, the identification of an ultimate consciousness able to grasp the totality. This task, not surprisingly, he assigns to the proletarian consciousness. Truth and

science are therefore only expressions of the one class consciousness, the worldview of the proletariat. While it is instinctively tempting to resist such reasoning, in admitting the interdependence between consciousness and reality and thus giving whatever ideology its philosophically justified portion of truth, Lukács has contributed a fundamental sophistication in the Marxist concept of ideology.

4.5. Gramsci's Theory of Hegemony

Antonio Gramsci, founding member of the Italian Communist Party and political prisoner until death, continued the line of thought of Engels and Lukács by turning away from a purely negative concept of ideology. For Gramsci every class not only the class in power at the respective historical stage has its own ideology. The latter is an expression of the contradictions in the social system and pertains to the societal superstructure. He acknowledges that Marxism is a superstructure like every other class ideology. (Larrain, 1979, p. 80)

In his *Quaderni dal Carcere* he states that the term ideology has undergone widespread misunderstanding because two different concepts are commonly intended by the same word both refer to “the necessary superstructure of a particular structure and to the arbitrary lucubrations of particular individuals”. He therefore distinguishes between “historically organic ideologies” which are “historically necessary” in as much as they “organize human masses, [...] form the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness in their position, struggle etc.” and arbitrary, individual ideologies. These “function like an error, which by contrasting with the truth, demonstrate it.” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 199) He asserts that the “philosophy of praxis”, i.e. the assumptions following historical materialism, is, as any other ideology, a

superstructure. Its superiority lies in the fact that other ideologies are short-lived. The latter are “contradictory, because they aim at reconciling opposed and contradictory interests; their ‘historicity’ will be brief because contradiction emerges after each event of which they been the instrument.” The “philosophy of praxis” “is not an instrument of government of dominant groups in order to gain the consent of and exercise hegemony over subaltern classes; it is the expression of these subaltern classes who want to educate themselves in the art of government and who have an interest in knowing all truths, even unpleasant ones, and in avoiding deceptions (impossible) by the ruling class and even more by themselves”. (Gramsci, 1999, pp. 196-197)

Gramsci’s contribution here lies in the recognition of admitting the “necessary and vital connection” between basis and superstructure and the inevitability of a conscious distortion by the latter of the real conditions and contradictions within the former. He continues to assert though that Marxism as a “science” is superior to any other, because of its conscious attempt to identify and eliminate all contradictions, be these material or conscious.

In his *Lettere dal Carcere*, Gramsci traces the interrelation between ideology and the material relations to historical materialism, the determined evolution of society in stages shaped by their distinct relations of production. In good orthodoxy, he assumes that superior relations of production cannot replace older ones unless the material conditions for this change have matured within the framework of the old society. The distinction between “organic ideologies” and what he called “arbitrary” or “conjunctural” ideologies serves here for a distinction to be made between the ideology of the old and that of the replacing new society, for which material

conditions have matured, on the one hand and ideologies of brief existence, which may point to a contradiction but do not offer a cohesive alternative and, more importantly, for which the material conditions are not given, on the other. Gramsci warns however of that when trying to distinguish organic and conjunctural ideologies to excessively stress the mechanical causes, i.e. the material conditions, and commit the mistake of “excessive economism”, whereas “excessive ideologism” equally leads to wrong conclusions. “The dialectical nexus between the structure and superstructure”, he admits, “is hard to establish precisely.” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 202) The superstructure, thus, even though created by the structure autonomously influences the structure within the framework of historical materialism. Gramsci explains this in his theory of the “relation of forces”. He contends firstly, that every relation of social forces is closely linked to the structure and independence of human will and can be evaluated scientifically. Secondly, the relations of political forces depend on the degree of homogeneity, self-awareness and organization of the various social groups. Here, he suggests three stages: a first and most elementary of economic-corporate cohesion, a second of a “solidarity of interests” within a social group purely in the economic field and a third, which marks the passage of the nature of the relations from the sphere of the structure to the sphere of the superstructure. In Gramsci’s words,

A third moment is that in which one becomes aware that one’s own corporate interests, in their present and future development, transcend the corporate limits of the merely economic group, and can and must become the interests of other subordinate groups. [...] it is the phase in which previously germinated ideologies become ‘party’, come into confrontation and conflict,

until one of them, or at least a single combination of them, tends to prevail, [...] to propagate itself over the whole social area - bringing about not only a unison of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity, posing all the questions around which the struggle rages not on a corporate but on a 'universal' plane, and this creating the hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups. (Gramsci, 1999, p. 205)

Hegemony thus includes ideology, uses ideology, for the purpose of consent and coercion. Ideology just "refers to the way power-struggles are fought out at the level of signification; and though such signification is involved in all hegemonic processes, it is not in all cases the dominant level by which rule is sustained." (Eagleton, 2007, p. 113) Hegemony is attributed to civil society, the intermediary between the economy and the state, which, according to Gramsci, in fact is the state, because of its dominance over the latter. (Gramsci, 1999, p. 210) Gramsci calls state and civil society two parts of a total, both of which realize hegemony through their specific means: whereas the state recurs to coercion, civil society recurs to consent. This does not mean that no views may diverge from the hegemonic one. Gramsci points to a "performative contradiction", in which a class or group may oppose in words the hegemonic ideology, but perpetuates it in its deeds, i.e. the ways opposition is expressed etc. (Eagleton, 2007, p. 118)

4.6. The Ideological State Apparatus and Ideology in Althusser

Louis Althusser attempted to provide a general theory of ideology in *For Marx* and in the section *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus* first published in *Lenin and Philosophy*.

Especially in the latter work he attempts to fill a void in Marxist philosophy: Ricoeur credits Althusser's contribution with "[allowing] us to move from what we might call a geography of ideologies to a theory of ideology". (Ricoeur, 1994, p. 53) Althusser starts in this enterprise by arguing that "reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also [...] a reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order, i.e. a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology." (Althusser, 1993, p. 6) This ruling ideology is part of the superstructure, which in the classical metaphor is depicted as two upper floors built on the societal edifice, one being the political-legal superstructure, the other being the ideological superstructure. This means that both levels of the superstructure could not exist without the base. Marxist tradition though acknowledges a relative autonomy of the superstructure as well as reciprocal action between superstructure and structure. The metaphor of the edifice does not provide a satisfactory dynamic explanation of the process of reproduction. Althusser therefore tries to unlock the rigid framework by asserting, "the State (and its existence in its apparatus) has no meaning except as a function of *State power*" (Althusser, 1993, p. 14). All political class struggle is about the seizure and conservation of State power by a certain class. A distinction has to be drawn between this State power and the State apparatus, which may survive changes in State power.⁸ Classical Marxism, especially Lenin, already stresses this distinction and declares the proletariat's eventual seizure of State power, to destroy the bourgeois State apparatus and its replacement with a proletarian one which eventually will lead to the destruction of both State power and apparatus. The refinement introduced by Althusser concerns the State apparatus. He distinguishes

⁸ Althusser points to the bourgeois revolutions in Eighteenth century France, one may equally point to the bureaucratic system in Imperial China.

between “Ideological State Apparatuses” (ISA) and the “Repressive State Apparatus” (RSA). (Althusser, 1993, p. 16) The latter includes the State administration, the police, the army etc. and assures the reproduction of the submission to the rules of the established order by force. As for the former, the ISA, Althusser lists a variety of them: the religious ISA (churches), the educational ISA (schools), the family ISA, the legal ISA, the political ISA (the political system, including the different political parties), the trade-union ISA, the communications ISA (the media) and the cultural ISA (the arts, literature etc.) (Althusser, 1993, p. 17). Althusser states that both apparatuses do not stick to their imminent *modi operandi*, violence and ideology, but rather only predominantly do so. Indeed the Repressive State Apparatus has to recur to ideology as well in order to guarantee its inner coherence and the Ideological State Apparatuses do as well recur to violence. To the question on what keeps the diverse ISA unified, Althusser observes,

Given the fact that the ‘ruling class’ in principle holds State power [...], and therefore has at its disposal the (Repressive) State Apparatus, we can accept the fact that this same ruling class is active in the Ideological State Apparatuses insofar as it is ultimately the ruling ideology which is realized in the Ideological State Apparatuses, precisely in its contradictions. [...] No class can hold State power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the State Ideological Apparatuses. (Althusser, 1993, p. 20)

The ISA are therefore “not only the stake, but also the site of class struggle”⁹ (Althusser, 1993, p. 21).

Althusser looks into the relationship between ideology and history in two ways. At one time, he states, “the score of the Ideology of the current ruling class which integrates into its music the great themes [of the past]” (Althusser, 1993, p. 28). At another, he claims “Ideology has no History”. Here he does not refer to the particular historical baggage of a specific ideology, but rather to ideology in general. Ideology, such as consciousness in Freud, is eternal, an omni-historical, unchanging reality. (Althusser, 1993, pp. 34-36)

Althusser in this general framework proposes two theses: Firstly, “Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence”. In other words

What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relations of those individuals to the real relations in which they live. (Althusser, 1993, p. 39)

The lived relation is thus reflected in ideology. Ricoeur notes that this relation “is the lived *as* imaginary. Therefore we have a real relation which is distorted in an imaginary relation.” (Ricoeur, 1994, p. 55) There are however, he adds, two levels of imagination according to Althusser, one that is the distorting level and the other, which is the distorted. (Ricoeur, 1994, p. 61)

Secondly, “Ideology has a material existence” in as much as

⁹ “The ideology of the ruling class does not become the ruling ideology by the grace of God, nor even by virtue of the seizure of State power alone. It is by the installation of the ISAs in which this ideology is realized and realizes itself that it becomes the ruling ideology” (Althusser, 1993, p. 59)

[an individual's] ideas are his material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject. (Althusser, 1993, p. 43)

Althusser thus moves ideology away from its conception as “false consciousness”, a mere “chimera” to a new conceptualization in the sphere of the real world. In fact, he pronounced man to be “an ideological animal” revising the Aristotelian term *ζῷον πολιτικόν*. The central assumption in Althusser’s general theory of ideology is thus that “ideology interpellates individuals as subjects” to assure the reproduction of the relations of production. He concludes

The reality in question in this mechanism, the reality which is necessarily *ignored (méconnue)* in the very forms of recognition (ideology = misrecognition / ignorance) is indeed in the last resort, the reproduction of the relations of production and of the relations deriving from them. (Althusser, 1993, pp. 56-57)

4.7. Karl Mannheim’s Historicist Conceptualization of Ideology and Utopia

Karl Mannheim attempted to set the ground for a “sociology of knowledge” by setting up a historicist framework of patterns in the development of worldviews *Weltanschauungen*. In this framework Mannheim builds on Hegelian, Marx’s and

Lukács' elaborations on the historical dialectics, the role and position of consciousness in the course of history without accepting the epistemological precedents of the Marxist elaborations of his time. Thus Mannheim's merit in terms of the conceptualization of ideology lies in, while building on the Marxist sophistications, inserting ideology into a rich historicist framework albeit with contradictions and imprecision.

In his essay *On the interpretation of Weltanschauung* (1953) Mannheim asserts that cultural products cannot be scrutinized with the methods applied to natural phenomena. The challenge in the sociological analysis lies in looking at these cultural products and relate them to the cultural totality from which they descend and which constitute their meaning. This totality is the "Weltanschauung"¹⁰ of a particular epoch and is composed of its various "objectifications", namely the relationalized meanings of the cultural products of that epoch. (Larrain, 1979, p. 101) Mannheim points to the existence of elements of irrationality in the context of cultural production, which he wants to put into a theoretic discourse. What he is analysing is nothing but the phenomenological experience of the internal dynamics of a *Weltanschauung* tracing the structures of thought. Mannheim distinguishes between three meanings in the process of understanding cultural products: (1) the objective meaning, (2) the intentional meaning, (3) the documentary meaning. Interpretation is, according to

¹⁰ Karl Mannheim provided an early definition of Weltanschauung in *Structures of Social Thinking* (1922-24): "It is humanistic psychology which constructs a world intermediate between the social and the spiritual levels, initially so disparate. Psychology creates a common denominator to which we must reduce actors so different as are the social and the spiritual, if we are, in any way, to understand one in terms of the other. The factor which it inserts between these two extreme poles is worldview (*Weltanschauung*). A worldview (of an era, a group, etc.) is a structurally linked set of experiential contextures which makes up the common footing upon which a multiplicity of individuals together learn from life and enter into it. A worldview is then neither the totality of spiritual formations present in an age nor the sum of individuals then present, but the totality of the structurally interconnected experiential sets which can be derived from either side, from the spiritual creations or from the social group formations" (Mannheim, 1982, p. 91)

Mannheim, a synthesis of the three (Namer, 2006, pp. 64-66). Relevant to the present elaboration is the third, the documentary meaning. Every historiographical effort has to make a choice in stressing certain aspects while neglecting other. This editorial choice provides the point of departure for the “sociology of knowledge”, because it is where the *Weltanschauung* reveals itself. Thus the method adopted by his “sociology of knowledge” is different from the method adopted by a historian. “History works out individual segments; the fundamental category of socio-genetic investigation is the ‘constellation’.” (Mannheim, 1982, p. 95) This necessarily requires a reflection of the own *Weltanschauung* before any real scrutiny of cultural products can begin, the realization of the concrete position of the thinker (*Standortsgebundenheit des Denkers*) (Mannheim, 1991, p. 70)

Karl Mannheim’s most extensive work on ideology is *Ideology and Empire* first published in 1929. Mannheim outlines four historical ideal type periods in which competition among social groups provides four different worldviews: The first is based on consensus and spontaneous cooperation in completely homogenous societal strata. The second is based on monopoly in societies where a single group imposes its worldview. A third is based on atomistic competition after the decline of the previously monopoly. A fourth, last period, is characterized by by a concentration of worldviews around a few dominant alternatives.¹¹ (Larrain, 1979, p. 105)

The concept of ideology came into existence, according to Mannheim, when during the fourth historical period a worldview as the most basic system of ideas and discourse encountered alien forms of ideas and discourse. (Eagleton, 2007, p. 106)

¹¹ The protagonists here are “free-floating intellectuals”, which cannot be understood by class-oriented [read Marxist] sociology. (Larrain, 1979, p. 116)

The historical process of conceptualization of ideology has undergone a transformation from a particular conception of ideology to a total one.

The particular conception of “ideology” makes its analysis of ideas on a purely psychological level. If it is claimed for instance that an adversary is lying, or that he is concealing or distorting a given factual situation, it is still nevertheless assumed that both parties share common criteria of validity. [...]

The suspicion that one’s opponent is the victim of an ideology does not go so far as to exclude him from discussion on the basis of a common theoretical frame of ideology. (Mannheim, 1991, p. 51)

The particular conception thus is, in other words, but judged a “phenomenon intermediate between a simple lie [...] and an error”. (Mannheim, 1991, p. 54)

The total conception of ideology “calls into question the opponent’s total *Weltanschauung* including his conceptual apparatus, and attempts to understand these concepts as an outgrowth of the collective life of which he partakes.” (Mannheim, 1991, p. 50) It’s here that we have a sociological analysis of worldviews. It goes without saying, and Mannheim himself points to it, the individual members of such a group, he takes the example of the proletariat, do not experience all the elements of the own *Weltanschauung*. “Every individual participates only in certain fragments of this thought-system, the totality of which is not in the least a mere sum of these fragmentary individual experiences,” (Mannheim, 1991, p. 52) hence the necessity of a sociology of knowledge to overcome this deficiency.

Mannheim traces the development of the total conception of ideology to when philosophy starts to question consciousness in the era of European enlightenment and, as a second step, to the Historical School and Hegel, in a third step, to the

Marxist scrutiny of “false consciousness.” (Mannheim, 1991, pp. 57-67) The passage from the total conception of ideology to the sociology of knowledge lies, according to Mannheim, in the very passage from the special formulation, as in Marxism, of the total conception of ideology, to a general one. The special formulation of ideology in Mannheim is in essence a critique of the superiority of consciousness of the proletariat in Lukács and others. It means

not [to] call his own position into question but regards it as absolute, while interpreting his opponents’ ideas as a mere function of the social positions they occupy. (Mannheim, 1991, p. 68)

To scrutinize the other without acknowledging the own distorting worldview is thereby a sanctimonious enterprise. Mannheim notes, “nothing was to prevent the opponents of Marxism from availing themselves of the weapon and applying it to Marxism itself”. (Mannheim, 1991, p. 67)

The general total conception of ideology can be approached in two ways: The “non-evaluative general conception” and the “evaluative general total conception”. Whereas the first is free from judgements of validity of ideas from within the framework of a worldview - and obviously an ideal type -, the latter adopts an epistemological-valuative approach. “The evaluative conception”, as summed up by Larrain, “has to separate the genuine from the ideologically distorted in norms and modes of thought”. (Larrain, 1979, p. 110) Here we arrive at Mannheim’s sociology of knowledge. “At the most sophisticated level of development,” Mannheim states, “the concept of ideology is [...] dissolved [and] supersedes the theory of ideology by a more general sociology of knowledge.” (Larrain, 1979, p. 111) Here, he attempts to reconstruct an ideal type of *Weltanschauung* which eventually looks into the “genetic

process of sociological imputation”, namely in which class or group worldviews originate and the structural situation of world-views, be that internal or external.

The second main contribution by Karl Mannheim is his elaboration of the dichotomous distinction between ideological thought and utopian thought in *Ideology and Utopia*:

Ideologies are the situationally transcendent ideas which never succeed de facto in the realization of their projected contents. Though they often become the good-intentioned motives for the subjective conduct of the individual, when they are actually embodied in practice their meanings are most frequently distorted. [...] Utopias too transcend the social situation, for they too orient conduct towards elements which the situation, in so far as it is realized at the time, does not contain. (Mannheim, 1991, pp. 175-176)

A few difficulties arise from this distinction. Firstly, what is considered utopian is dependent “on the stage and degree of reality of which one applies this standard.” (Mannheim, 1991, p. 176) From a conservative worldview (in the sense of a worldview directed at preserving an existing order), utopian are ideas that can in principle never be realized, because they transcend the given social order. From an anarchist worldview, as in Landauer, utopia dialectically clashes with *topia* (the present existing order), whereas the existing order is only “an evil residue which remains from ebbing utopias and revolutions. Hence, the road of history leads from one *topia* over a utopia to the next *topia*.” (Mannheim, 1991, p. 178) Mannheim observes that both conceptualizations of ideology, the conservative and the anarchist, blur the concept of utopia and, again, counts on the sociology of knowledge to provide a clear distinction between relative and absolute utopias.

Secondly, there might be a fusion of utopian and ideological thought in the worldview of a class or social group.¹² Mannheim's solution is limiting the scope of analysis to the past, where the realization of the ideology / utopia can be ascertained. Here, Larrain points out, Mannheim renounces any effort to understand present ideological and utopian thought. (Larrain, 1979, p. 114)

Mannheim conclusively traces changes in the configuration of utopias (the Utopian mentality) on whether these are projections in time (chiliasm) or in space (utopias). (Kupiec, 2006, p. 79) These, he notes, do not only affect the future, but also the recollection of the past. The "orgiastic Chiliasm of the Anabaptists" is how he calls the utopian mentality of a first period, which embodies the emergence of a spiritualization of politics¹³ (Mannheim, 1991, p. 191). The impetus of change did not come from "ideas", but rooted, Mannheim states, "in much deeper-lying vital and elemental levels of the psyche" (Mannheim, 1991, p. 192) The second form of Utopian mentality is the "Liberal-humanitarian Idea", based on positivist theorization and its implicit rationality. The third form is "The Conservative Idea", which has no predisposition to theorizing. Conservative Utopia is but a "counter-utopia". The fourth form is the "Socialist-Communist Utopia". (Mannheim, 1991, pp. 190-215) Eagleton observes that Mannheim in inflating the meaning of ideology did not succeed in providing a congruent and unambiguous key to the understanding of ideology. (Eagleton, 2007, pp. 109-110)

¹² Mannheim illustrates this point with clarity with the example of the bourgeois idea of freedom. (Mannheim, 1991, p. 183)

¹³ "It is at this point that politics in the modern sense of the term begins, if we here understand by politics a more or less conscious participation of all strata of society in the achievement of some mundane purpose, as contrasted with a fatalistic acceptance of events as they are" (Mannheim, 1991, p. 191)

4.8. “The Tragic View” in Goldmann

The Romanian-born French sociologist Lucien Goldmann provides a compelling and elegant study of ideology in *Le Dieu Caché* first published in 1955. He looks at “mental structures” which operate in common structures in politics, philosophy and literary productions taking the example of the “*vision tragique*” shared by declining the *noblesse de robe*, the Jansenist sect, the philosophy of Pascal and the drama of Racine in late 17th century France. What at first sight seems a forced attempt to explain phenomena of a period by excessive interpretation turns out to provide a major re-elaboration of the Marxist view of ideology away from economic determinism to the concession of a sublime influence of social and economic conditions of a group and time to the groups’ thought structures and by shaping the content of thought.

Mary Evans brings Goldmann’s accomplishment to the point by stating that he “shows how the needs of particular social groups for explanations of changes in their social world can result in the elaboration of ideologies which are then brought to the point of maximum coherence by individuals.” (Evans, 1981, p. 75)

Lucien Goldmann thus tries - at least to some extent - to reconcile the organic determinism of Marxism with the idealistic claims of individualism through his definition of *Weltanschauung*. He states:

Si, donc, la plupart des elements *essentiels* qui composent la structure schématique des écrits de Kant, Pascal et Racine sont analogues *malgré* les différences qui séparent ces écrivains en tant qu'individus empiriques vivants, nous sommes obligés de conclure à l'existence d'une réalité que n'est plus purement individuelle et qui s'exprime à travers leurs œuvres. C'est

précisément la vision du monde, et, dans le cas précis des auteurs que nous venons de citer, la *vision tragique* [...]. (Goldmann, 1976, pp. 24-25)

Goldmann achieves this reconciliation in a contentious compromise. While the everyday consciousness reflects the worldview of time in a disordered fashion unintelligible for the social scientist, some individuals with privileged abilities¹⁴ can and do reflect the worldview, not in content but in structure. To look at their works thus enables the social scientist to look into the epistemological structure of a class or social group, which their exceptional abilities are able to present in its purest form. If one accepts this assumption, one would have to argue that these exceptional works thus do not reflect the totality of the worldview of the individual members of a class or social group, but rather the possible reach of their so structured thinking, if it were exceptional. A worldview is, according to Goldmann,

cet ensemble d'aspirations, de sentiments et d'idées qui réunit les membres d'un groupe (le plus souvent, d'une classe sociale) et les oppose aux autres groupes. (Goldmann, 1976, p. 26)

The worldview has an identifying function of a social group, lays down its aims and the structures of its thinking and feeling.¹⁵ To look at the worldview of a class or social group therefore means looking at the actual historical conditions of the very class or social group, because, and Goldmann here does build on the Marxist tradition, these structures of thinking and feeling are shaped by the material

¹⁴ Il en résulte que les individus exceptionnels expriment *meux* et d'une manière plus précise la conscience collective que les autres membres du groupe." (Goldmann, 1976, p. 27)}

¹⁵ "feeling" in the sense of moral conclusions resulting from subconscious determinants as in Sigmund Freud.

conditions members of the class or social group share.¹⁶ These structures are in a constant process of change, where old structures are dissembled and new structures created. To understand the structures of thinking that make a worldview, it is vital to look at the history of a structural fragment and look into the shared material conditions that led to its coming into existence.

Goldmann does not offer a systematic elaborations of worldview, he establishes no clear distinction between worldview and ideology¹⁷ and the claim of intellectual eminence, even though probably not known by the very intellectual under scrutiny, of some (and therefore not others) are lacunae in the intriguing study of the worldview of a class in decline. For all that, Goldmann pointed to communalities in the structure of thinking of a class or a social group and the dynamics of their historical development.

4.9. The Frankfurt School's Ideologiekritik

The Frankfurt School adapted Marxist social theory to economic and social conditions of their time, which Marx himself could not have foreseen in his own theory. Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, Fromm ea. were confronted with the great crises of liberal capitalism in the interwar period, the rise of national-socialism, exile in the United States and, ultimately, the "*Bourgeoisierung*" of the working class in the post-war era. Ideology had to be redefined to a more universally valid notion yet

¹⁶ One might substitute the latter part with "by the material conditions members of the class or social group *believe to share*"

¹⁷ Some disagree: (Eagleton, 2007, p. 111; Larrain, 1979, p. 127)

building on the Hegelian dialectical method and Marxist notions of capital and reification, while rejecting Marx's objectivity claims.

For Theodor Adorno in *Negative Dialektik* (1973) ideology is a mechanism of abstract thought exchange able to reduce the "other" to what fits into a closed worldview. Thus he writes,

Identity is the primal form of ideology. We relish it as adequacy to the thing it suppresses; adequacy has always been subjection to dominant purposes and, in that sense, its own contradiction. After the unspeakable effort it must have cost our species to produce the primacy of identity even against itself, man rejoices and basks in his conquest by turning it into the definition of the conquering thing: what has happened to it must be presented, by the thing, as its "in-itself." Ideology's power of resistance to enlightenment is owed to its complicity with identifying thought, or indeed, thought at large. The ideological side of thinking shows in its permanent failure to make good on the claim that non-I is finally the I: the more the I thinks, the more perfectly will it find itself debased into an object. Identity becomes the authority for a doctrine of adjustment [...]. The critique of ideology is thus not something peripheral and intra-scientific, not something limited to the objective mind and the products of the subjective mind. Philosophically, it is central: it is a critique of the constitutive consciousness itself. (Adorno, 1973, p. 148)

His assumption that ideology is but "identity thinking" leads away from the dichotomy of ideology and truth to a new dichotomy between ideology and heterogeneity. (Eagleton, 2007, p. 126) Adorno famously stated that if a lion had consciousness, then the rage against the antelope, which he wants to eat, would be

ideology. (Adorno, 1973, p. 212) Ideology thus serves the function of attributing to the superstructure's extrapolations of the structure the appearance (*Schein*) of the necessary, hypostasize them as natural givens. The difference to Marx lies in the idea that ideology serves to homogenize the world, far away from its Marxian function of mere subservience.

In earlier *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1944), Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer observe,

Today, with the transformation of the world into industry, the perspective of the universal, the social realization of thought, is so fully open to view that thought is repudiated by the rulers themselves as mere ideology. (Adorno, 1973, p. 29)

This work manages to reveal that reason, the attempted means to reveal objective truth, has been utilized for ideological domination and that, ultimately, enlightenment itself based on myths. If domination is achieved through the internalization of alienation, as stated above, then “objective truth” turns out to be the most striking legitimizing argument. Herbert Marcuse continues this line of thought in his *One-Dimensional Man* published in 1964. Here he criticizes the “fusion of the levels of cultural critique and political economy [...] as a direct outcome of the new requirements of total mobilization in late capitalism.” (Agger, 1992, p. 133) Marcuse points to a change in domination mechanism in capitalist society. Whereas in early capitalism domination was guaranteed through a conception of dutiful behaviour, in late capitalism a culture that equates the necessity of work with freedom and leisure restricts the possibilities of possible action to within the structure of “rational”

domination. Ethics as part of the cultural sphere are rationalized and as for remnants of irrationality he writes:

Outside this rationalization (a term adopted from Max Weber), one lives in a world of values, and values separated out from the objective reality become subjective. The only way to rescue some abstract and harmless validity for them seems to be a metaphysical sanction (divine and natural law). But such sanction is not verifiable and thus not really objective. Values [...] are not *real* and thus count less in the real business of life - the less so the higher they are elevated *above* rationality. (Marcuse, 2002, p. 151)

This makes the individual ever more bound to a reified present, which ever more seems to be the only world possible. The only possible escape for the individual is the “Great Refusal”, rejecting the seductions of the consumer culture and its rationality. (Agger, 1992, p. 149)

Jürgen Habermas uses the term “ideology” differently to earlier members of the Frankfurt School and basically refers to the beliefs the agents in a society hold. According to Mannheim, one can distinguish ideologies in two ways: (1) in regards to what they are about: a set of beliefs about superhuman entities thus is a religious ideology. (2) by their functional properties: a set of beliefs of no matter what content which influences a certain set of practices. What in content would be called an economic ideology influences religious practice therefore should also be seen as a religious ideology. (Geuss, 1981, pp. 7-8)

This diversion as a corollary, Mannheim agrees with Marcuse in

the progressive ‘rationalization’ of society is linked to the institutionalization of scientific and technical development. To the extent that technology and science permeate social institutions and thus transform them, old legitimations are destroyed. The secularization and ‘disenchantment’ of action-orienting worldviews, of cultural tradition as a whole, is the obverse of the growing ‘rationality’ of social action. (Habermas, 1970, p. 81)

He distinguishes though between “purposive-rational action” (i.e. labour) and “interaction”. Whereas purposive-rational action is either instrumental action or rational choice or their conjunction, interaction is communicative, symbolic action. Interaction is governed by consensual norms, which allow for communication and define expectations. Incompetent behaviour violates valid technical rules and is condemned to failure. Deviant behaviour violates consensual norms connected to the rules only by conventional practice and therefore is not necessarily bound to failure. In terms of this basic distinction Habermas distinguishes between social systems where purposive-rational action or interaction dominate. The institutional framework consists of norms guided by symbolic interaction, whereas in the economic system or the state apparatus purposive-rational action is institutionalized. In the analysis of rationalization one has therefore to keep in mind this distinction. (Habermas, 1970, pp. 91-94)

He affirms Marcuse by stating that societal stability is secured as long the institutional framework legitimized by mythical, religious and metaphysical interpretations of reality keeps in check the subsystems of purposive-rational action (“superiority criterion”). The capitalist mode of production allows for the expansion of subsystems of purposive-rational action and overturns the superiority of the

institutional framework to the forces of production and calls into question the traditional legitimation to power. Traditional worldviews lose their cogency in process of secularization already described by Weber and are reshaped into subjective belief systems and ethics which ensure private abiding to them. Equally, new legitimations impose themselves on the old ones by criticizing the dogmatism of traditional interpretations and a claim for universal because scientific validity. Ideologies do not disappear, Habermas claims:

Yet [ideologies] retain legitimating functions, thereby keeping actual power relations inaccessible to analysis and to public consciousness. It is in that ideologies in the restricted sense first came into being. They replace traditional legitimations of power by appearing in the mantle of modern science and by deriving their justification from the critique of ideology. Ideologies are coeval with the critique of ideology.¹⁸ In this sense there can be no pre-bourgeois 'ideology'. (Habermas, 1970, p. 99)

Habermas thus restricts his definition of ideology to the result of the reduction from holistic to individual validity of worldviews. Ideologies are the legitimising remains of the institutional system of myths and symbols that work as a corollary stabilising force in addition to the stabilising logic of the now dominant systems of purposive-rational action. This view of ideologies as a product of the capitalist society and the denial of existence of ideology in the pre-bourgeois society seems contentious, because it juxtaposes a modern "ideology" with a pre-modern "worldview" in terms

¹⁸ See *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus* (1973): "Cultural traditions have their own, vulnerable, conditions of reproduction. They remain 'living' as long as they take shape in an unplanned, nature-like manner, or are shaped with hermeneutic consciousness. [...] The critical appropriation of tradition destroys this nature-like character in discourse." (Habermas, 1976, p. 70)

of legitimising scope and calls the former mere remains of the latter. This simplification serves the point in Habermas analysis of a critique of late capitalism, but does not provide a satisfactory answer if one tries to go beyond the determinism imposed by historical materialism.

Technology and science, according to Habermas, can become a “background ideology that penetrates into the consciousness of the depoliticized masses [...], where it can take on legitimating power.” (Habermas, 1970, p. 105) Because of this epochal change, Habermas continues, “class struggle” and “ideology” are terms to be redefined. Class antagonisms persist not in their obvious former state of being, but rather in a latent form between the dominant group culture and underprivileged groups. The change lies in the fact that the dominant group does not live anymore from the exploitation of the marginal groups. Revolutionary action by the underprivileged, according to Habermas, is not possible through the simple withdrawal of cooperation.

The technocratic consciousness is, on the one hand, ‘less ideological’ than all previous ideologies. For it does not have the opaque force of a delusion that only transfigures the implementation of interests. On the hand, today’s dominant [...] background ideology, which makes a fetish of science, is more irresistible and farther-reaching than ideologies of the old type. For with the veiling of practical problems it not only justifies a *particular class*’ interest in domination and represses *another class*’ partial need for emancipation, but affects the human race’s emancipatory interest as such.

(Habermas, 1970, p. 111)

For Habermas, the advantage of this new ideology lies in its failure to project a “good life”, an enterprise easily to be disillusioned, and, more importantly, that loyalty is created “through the creation of “privatized needs” (Habermas, 1970, p. 112). The gloomy view of a change late capitalism apparently imposes on human consciousness is, as argued above, reductive, but offers insight into the legitimizing mechanisms of a worldview based on claims of rationality.

4.10. Symbolic Capital in Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu published a study of gift exchange among the Kabyles in Algeria in 1972 and underlined this study with a major contribution to the study of ideology in *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique*:

The effect of legitimation of the established order is thus not solely the work of the mechanisms traditionally regarded as belonging to the order of ideology, such as law. The system of cultural goods production and the system producing the producers also fulfil ideological functions, as a by-product, through the very logic of their functioning, owing to the fact that the mechanisms through which they contribute to the reproduction of the social order and the permanence of the relations of domination remain hidden. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 133)

Bourdieu modifies the previous concepts of consciousness to explain why a system of cultural goods production works perpetuating itself while in itself not being an inescapable prison of the mind of the oppressed. As Marxism loses its policy-orientation, false consciousness and the actions it causes lose their specific character

and allow for a less restricted analysis. Bourdieu in fact, by looking into the gift exchanges in Kabylia, builds on the structuralist findings in linguistics, psychology and sociology to establish a theory of a vaguely binding cultural system, which not only produces a social stratification deemed to be just, but embeds the very social system in every aspect of cultural expression, every word uttered and gesture made by a member of that social system.¹⁹ Ideology is not anymore the means of subjecting a oppressing class to unconscious serfdom, but rather the vital content reproduced in the practice of members of a social system. He calls this practice the “performative magic of the social”. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 57) While he maintains domination to be a principal element of every social system, he distinguishes between symbolic and material capital, the former being “misrecognized” material capital. Material wealth, on the other hand, “can function as capital only in relationship with a specifically economic field” (Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 122-123) where it’s value is recognized. Cognition in its forms misrecognition and recognition creates “socially constituted subjectivity” and therefore has to be the point of departure for the study of ideology as the mechanisms of reproduction of a system of cultural goods production.

Social practice and cultural reproduction proceeds within a temporally dialectic process between “objectified products” and “incorporated goods of historical practice” to achieve the “production of a common-sense world” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 58), the “objectified products” being the fortified structures, the “incorporated goods of historical practice” being what he defines the “*habitus*”, which is

a system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which

¹⁹ This leads Bourdieu too a similar conclusion with Althusser in regards to the importance of the school system as an ideological institution. (Thompson, 1984, p. 57)

generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at the ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53)

Judith Butler rephrases that definition to "embodied rituals of everydayness by which a given culture produces and sustains belief in its own "obviousness". (Butler, 1999, pp. 113-114) The habitus therefore does not determine social practice but rather motivates the reproduction of practices through the belief of the very obviousness of an action.

Social actions do not arise solely from the motivation impetus of the habitus, but rather are the product of another dialectic moment, the interaction between the habitus, i.e. dispositions, and the "field", a social arena for the actions of the individual. These reciprocally influence each other in a historic process. (Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 66-68)

It is thus the habitus, which allows the institution to be considered as valid, necessary and obvious. "An institution", Bourdieu declares, "is fully viable only if its is durably objectified not only in things, [...] but also [...] in durable dispositions to recognize and comply with the demands immanent in the field." (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 58)

The question arises if Bourdieu limits individuality to the capacity to defy in one's actions the reproduction of a dominant group habitus. Bourdieu admits a difference between a "class habitus" and an "individual habitus", but states that the "singular habitus of members of the same class are united in a relationship of homology, that

is, of diversity within homogeneity reflecting the diversity within homogeneity characteristic of their social conditions of production.” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 60) Here and in his visual of fields, one of which is the market, Bourdieu sticks to Marxist historic materialism, even though in a very innovative way. He argues that in the pre-capitalist society symbolic violence maintained relations of domination through strategies, which “if they are not to destroy themselves by revealing their true nature, must be disguised, [...] euphemized.” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 126) The pre-capitalist economy -read society-, contrary to the capitalist economy, “cannot count on the implacable, hidden violence of objective mechanisms which enable the dominant to limit themselves to reproduction strategies.” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 126) There is thus no end of ideology in the thought of Bourdieu, but only a the perception in line with Marcuse that capitalist society has established a dominant ideology which manages to hide its oppressive character behind a veil of objective mechanisms.

The group habitus is not necessarily able to adapt to changes in the material conditions of production. This comes, Bourdieu argues, from the tendency of individuals, members of these groups, to stick to durable dispositions that can outlive economic and social conditions. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 52) The ramifications of this statement in terms of our study of ideologies is substantial, because Bourdieu succeeds in explaining how marginalised ideologies and ideologies incoherent with social and economic conditions can subsist.

4.11. The Social Imaginary in Castoriadis

Cornelius Castoriadis is not to be found in the usual references to the study of ideology. Yet, the concept of “social imaginary” he elaborated with Claude Lefort in the 1950ies as co-editors of the journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie* is a vital for the understanding of ideology within Post-Marxist theory.

Castoriadis criticizes Marx to extrapolate the whole process of historical change from the phase of bourgeois revolution. His schema is - here Castoriadis agrees with Bourdieu - thus not applicable to pre-feudal and non-industrialized countries. The fundamental reason of this “mistake” is an epistemological one. Marx follows Western rationalism in the assumption that laws govern the process of historical change, reducing action into categories with inevitable ends. This action can be studied through scientific inquiry. Ideology is just one phenomenon that makes sure conduct of the many remain within the bounds of oppression by the few in a capitalist society. Ideology can, as said, be studied by that very scientific inquiry. Castoriadis accuses Marx of relativizing his discovery of the creative capacity of classes by forcing it into the bounds of action already pre-determined by the course of history. Castoriadis declares the whole Western study of the nature of society and history, including Marx, to have been tainted by the very ontology of determinacy. (Thompson, 1984, pp. 17-21) “Different modes of historicity” in societies point to different ways of “instituting their own particular temporality.” (Castoriadis, 1997b, p. 215) The constant alteration at different paces seems to be concealed from view from within a society.

Thus everything happens as if the time of social doing, essentially irregular, accidental, altering, must always be imaginarily reabsorbed through a denial of time by means of the eternal return of the same, its representations as pure

usury and corruption, its levelling out in the indifference of the merely quantitative difference, its annulment before Eternity. Everything happens as if the terrain where the creativity of society is manifested in the most tangible manner, the terrain where it makes, makes be and makes itself be in making be, must be covered over by an imaginary creation ordered in such a way that the society can conceal from itself what it is. Everything happens as if the society must negate itself as society, hide its social being in negating the temporality which is first and above all its own temporality, the time of alterations-alterity which it makes be and which makes it be as society. Another way of saying the same thing: everything happens as if society could not recognize itself as making itself, as institution of itself, as self-institution. (Castoriadis cited in (Thompson, 1984, p. 22))

Castoriadis reformulates Marx' assumption that ideology is the instrument of the ruling class to a mere misrecognition by society in its entirety of its temporal being. Castoriadis therefore attributes that illusion existing in and fundamental to cohesion in every society. The binding link is the "social imaginary". The Imaginary, as a product of the *vis formandi* of human collectives, is composed of the language, customs, norms

once created, both imaginary social significations and institutions crystallize, or solidify, and that is what I call the *instituted social imaginary*. It provides continuity within society, the reproduction and repetition of the same forms, which henceforth regulate people's lives and persist as long as no gradual historical change or massive new creation occurs, modifying them or radically replacing them with others. (Castoriadis, 2007, pp. 73-74)

Here we are at the basis of the concept of ideology adopted in this thesis: ideology as the active but unconsciously referred to parts of the social imaginary that serve to reproduce the same form of social imaginary and thus the society it represents.

Society is thus a “self-creation” in a constant process of “self-alteration”. Some constraints shape the alteration of the social imaginary. Firstly, external constraints account for biological constraints and respond to the functionality of institutions. Secondly, internal constraints tie the imaginary with the psyche supplying the latter with meaning of existence of the self, the particular society and the world. Thirdly, there are historical constraints. Castoriadis argues, “the relation to this past is itself a part of the institution of society [...] Re-creation of the past is done according to the imaginary significations of the present.” Fourthly, there are two fundamental intrinsic constraints: coherence²⁰ and “closure of meaning”. The latter means “any ‘question’ which can be formulated at all in the language of this society must find its answer within the magma of the social imaginary significations of the society.”²¹ (Castoriadis, 1997a, pp. 333 - 336)

He distinguishes furthermore between primal institution and second-order institutions of society. The former is the reproduction of society through the social imaginary, the latter are the articulations and implementations of the primal institution of society. Some may be transhistorical such as language, i.e. there is no society without language, some may be specific to one society. (Castoriadis, 2007, p. 101)

²⁰ “Pyramid building with starving peasants is coherent when referred to the whole organization and social imaginary significations of the Pharaonic or Mayan societies.” (Castoriadis, 1997b, p. 335)

²¹ This explains the classifying of defining European Great Powers in the light of the *tianxia* concept of international relations in ancient China and eventually dealing with them.

Castoriadis' reflection provokes a look into the dynamics of the creation, reproduction and eventual breakdown of a social imaginary. He himself states however, that there are "no 'laws' commanding the radical imagination, when it flourishes and when it fades away." (Castoriadis, 2007, p. 76) The acknowledgement of that process allows for a totally different look e.g. at the disintegration of body politics. Castoriadis points to the collapse of the Roman Empire, where the "breakdown of the social imaginary significations underlying the institutions, was simply facilitated by the Germanic invasions. [...] Similar major facts are visible in every society whose evolution is documented: in Egypt, the Middle East, India, China, and even in Mesoamerica." (Castoriadis, 2007, p. 76) In terms of International Relations Theory, Castoriadis' theory sustains constructivism in its criticism of preceding mainstream schools of thought.

In final analysis, Castoriadis follows the way of the Frankfurt School in asserting in warning of "a path that leads to the loss of meaning, [...] the growing takeover of the capitalist imaginary of the unlimited expansion of 'rational mastery' [...] of the unlimited expansion of consumption for consumption's sake, [...] and of technoscience [...], a party to dominations by that capitalist imaginary." (Castoriadis, 2007, p. 86)

4.12. The End of Ideology and the End of History

Western social sciences since the end of the Second World War have come to an "orthodox consensus" (Giddens) that modernity eventually extinguishes "ideological" alienation from self-regulating, natural progress towards modernity. This was Daniel Bell's thesis in his *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* first

published in 1960. A classless society was to emerge and eventually prevail which would progress not through ideological imagining of better societies and the political struggle to achieve these, but rather through steady technical advances. (Bell, 1960/1965) For Bell, Shils, Lipset and their contemporaries the American comparative affluence was evidence to the superiority of Western individualism, legalism and liberalism. Thus, according to Lemert, “the ideology of the end of ideology was a pre-emptory strike in the Cold War, in which Western intellectuals declared victory”. (Lemert, 1991, p. 170) With the radicalisation of the American and European publics in the 1960ies, the questioning of the goodness of Burnham’s “managerial revolution” led to a reappraisal of “ideology” as a political concept. (Zhao, 1993, p. 70) With the “End of History” thesis, first put forward by the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama in a 1989 essay and in his 1992 book, again Western liberal, individual modernity has come to be seen as the ultimate “ideology” eventually, and soon, eclipsing the ideologies of contrasting views of modernity. (Fukuyama, 1992/1992) Again, “Modernity’s foundational ideology was that Truth undistorted could produce Power uncorrupted.” (Lemert, 1991, p. 168) Post-modern social theorists have come to question the existence of ideology per se. Michel Foucault argues for an eclipse of the relevance of ideology in social sciences by going beyond the domains of consciousness and cognition central to the traditional analyses of ideology. For him, the biopower’s social cohesion stems from social practises rather than through social beliefs. (Zhao, 1993, p. 72) Post-structuralism emphasises the instability of meaning and disavow the idea of representation. Jacques Derrida’s questioning of linguistic meaning to be linked to determinable particular set of signifiers erodes the feasibility of grasping ideologies

on a theoretical level. (Zhao, 1993, p. 76) Jean Baudrillard's work eliminates the distinction between the real and the imaginary by relegating all human experience to be "simulacra". (Baudrillard, 1981) Althusser's conception of ideology as an imaginary set of relations to real economic conditions loses meaning in a world where even the latter are *simulacra*.

While humbling social analysis by its constant questioning of the questioning, post-modern theory runs the danger of relegating analytical thought to continuous self-criticism. As Fukuyama wittingly in a 1995 article defending his End of History thesis,

The postmodernist professor who asserts that there is no coherent direction to history would most likely never contemplate leaving his comfortable surroundings in Paris, New Haven or Irvine, and move to Somalia, or raise his children under the hygienic conditions prevailing in Burundi. (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 34)

Fukuyama in this article, calling for a reappraisal of modernity theories, also admits several conditions, which would falsify the modernity universalism he inherited from Hegel and Kojève: (1) if liberal democracy collapses as a viable state system; (2) "if a society based on genuinely different principles arose somewhere in the world and looked like it was a going concern over a long period of time (my candidate is an Asian 'soft authoritarian' state)"; (3) if principles preceding Western liberalism returned and gained wide-spread legitimacy. He admits that his proclaimed end of history theory is not based on empirical facts, but "all it can do is give us a certain basis for hope". (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 35)

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri published *Empire* in 2000. Their best-selling approach of the development of the political and economic world order built on

both Fukuyama's understanding of a prevailing ahistorical modernity and the post-modern relativities of truth. They attribute "Empire" not to a particular state or group of states, but rather to a "*decentered* and *detrterritorializing* apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global real within its open, expanding frontiers". (Hardt & Negri, 2000/2001, p. xii) Empire becomes the word of their choosing because of the universalistic/global aspirations of imperial (not imperialist) discourse historically associated to the understanding of the word. For Hardt and Negri globalisation has reached a moment of paradigmatic change in economic relations and thus, in Marxist tradition, social, legal and cultural relations. The "informationalisation" and the very globality of economic relations lead them to observe the – undisputed – erosion of the Westphalian "inter-national" state system and proclaim a – disputed – end to modernisation *per se* towards "postmodernisation" characterised by a dominance of immaterial labour in a post-Westphalian truly "global" world order. (Hardt & Negri, 2000/2001, p. 289) This global word order is what they call Empire and what has been previously proclaimed to be the "end of history". In orthodox Marxist fashion, they negate this stage to be the final stage of human development, by forecasting an end to capitalist global Empire through their redefinition of the proletariat, the "multitude". (Hardt & Negri, 2000/2001, p. 367) With Hardt and Negri updating Marxist theory for the 21st century, the understanding of ideology implicit in this update has returned to Marx' vision of "nebulous constructs" and left the present diversity of world views to be once again channelled into Western dialectical uniformities. The scientific goal of elucidating the ideologies of different worldviews that continue to exist and evolve succumbs to ideological discussions.

5. Empires and their Imaginaries

5.1. Terminology and Literature Review

The history of the study about “Empire” is as old as the term itself and as manifold as the meanings the term has assumed to fit into the respective frameworks of explanation. This has led to a myriad of different partly conflicting understandings, to which historical processes are given a selective reading in order to fit into the theoretical framework. In particular, Marxist theory, so profound in its analysis of the interrelation of classes and the unconscious factors binding society, shaped the present-day understanding of ‘empire’ by defining it as the mere exploitation of the peripheries as an the uttermost expression of late capitalism.

Thus, the understanding of Empire and Imperialism as its policy has not much evolved from its 19th century understanding of Western Great Powers seeking exploitable colonies to spread a superior culture. Non-western Imperial political frameworks and their inherent worldviews have been shelved as a objects of antiquity, lacking relevance in an apparently absolute Westphalian community of states. The Constructivist School in International Relations Theory provided the groundbreaking theoretical basis to challenge the Westphalian sovereignty paradigm which served a departure point for the classic schools of Realism, Neo-Realism and Institutionalism. This breakthrough has reverberated into the study of world history in the last two decades and its studies are steadily de-mystifying International Relations Theory from the myth of Westphalian universality. (Osiander, 2001), (Krasner, 1993), (Krasner, 1999), (Krasner, 2001)

For the scope of this thesis, Empire is looked at not from an anthropological view, but rather from a holistic sociological. The attempt is made to explain how Empire as an idea, a vision of a universal hierarchy governing the totality of the “world”, however fictitious, has served a legitimising purpose to perpetuate the founding ideology of a state and its vision of the state system, even without a “real” empire (economic, territorial, cultural impact on a global scale) at hand. It will be shown that this legitimising function is not exercised as a conscious practice (such as taxation, war..), but rather works on a subconscious level, shaping the discourse of whoever has to claim legitimacy over the monopoly of power. It is therefore attempted to reveal the ideological function of empire while freeing both terms from the deforming usage applied by the traditional scholars of imperialism such as Hobson, Lenin and Schumpeter and subsequent mainstream imperialism critique. Indeed, little could be added to Lenin's definition as “parasitic or decaying capitalism” (Lenin, 1973, p. 150) or Schumpeter's view that imperialism is an “objectiveless disposition on the part of the state to unlimited forcible expansion” or a “purely instinctual inclination towards war and conquest.” (Schumpeter, 1951, p. 7)

According to Colomer, Empire-wide political and institutional processes disappeared from the field of academic political studies after World War II. He notes that between 1950 and 1967 not a single work has been published at the American Political Science Review with “empire” or “imperial” in the title. (Colomer, 2008, p. 50) W. Ullmann made one rare contribution on the legitimacy of the European medieval empires. (Ullmann, 1964) In 1967, Israeli sociologist Shmuel N. Eisenstadt published a collection of short essays in *The Decline of Empires*. (*The Decline of Empires*, 1967)

In the 1980ies, in unison with the Constructivist critique at traditional IR theory, the concept of Empire received a burst of interest.

The Estonian-American political scientist Rein Taagepera published three articles in 1978 - 79 on *Size and Duration of Empires* in the journal *Social Science Research*. (Taagepera, 1978b) (Taagepera, 1978a), (Taagepera, 1979) Taagepera relativizes the commonly assumed cyclical life-process of empires in a painstaking empirical analysis.

A standard work on empires in global history remains *Le Concept d'Empire* edited by Maurice Duverger and published in 1980. (*Le Concept D'empire*, 1980) Benedict Anderson's 1983 *Imagined Communities* traces Asian nationalisms to imperial pasts. (Anderson, 1983) Michael W. Doyle published *Empires* in 1986, a thorough critique of previous analyses of the concept and delineating a "Historical Sociology of Empires". Unfortunately, his critique does not provide a consistent theoretical framework itself and fails, for instance, in explaining the Ottoman Empire's durability when giving a historical account of imperial formations. (Doyle, 1986) Geoffrey Parker's *Geopolitics of Domination*, published in 1988, went into the same direction, lacks Doyle's analytical depth. (Parker, 1988)

Since publishing an essay in *The City and the Empire* in 1986, (Porter, 1986) professor Andrew Porter from King's College in London has been a prolific writer on empire theory, most notably drawing from European imperialism (Porter, 1994) and the role of religion. (Porter, 2004)

The Age of Empire. 1875 – 1914 by Eric J. E. Hobsbawm, published in 1989, while cited considerably, remains within the limits of Western traditional analysis of Empire. (Hobsbawm, 1987) The same is true for Jack L. Snyder's 1991 *Myths of Empire*. (Snyder, 1991)

In 1998, David Armitage from Harvard published a collection of studies on Empire in *Theories of Empire, 1450 – 1800*, setting the scope to a historical analysis of the term in Europe and the early United States. (Armitage, 1998) In 2000, he published *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (*The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, 2000). *The British Atlantic World, 1500 – 1800* edited by Armitage and Michael Braddick, published in 2002, made an effort into extracting a theoretical understanding on the super-state in terms of connections (migratory, economic, religious, scientific) and identities (authority, gender, race) from this historical analysis. (*The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, 2002)

In 1998 Thomas Sowell's *Conquests and Cultures* looks into the interplay between the two and thus provides a valuable insight into the function cultures perform to secure domination after conquest. (Sowell, 1998) Alexander J. Motyl provides the so far most coherent theoretical framework for the life-process of empires in a January 1999 article in the journal *Comparative Politics*, focussing on Russia and later the same year in *Revolutions, Nations, Empires*. A previous contribution has been his contribution *Thinking about Empire* in *After Empire. Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building* edited by Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen in 1997. (Motyl, 1977) He refined his thesis in *Imperial Ends: The Decay, Collapse and Revival of Empires*, published in 2001. (Motyl, 1999b), (Motyl, 1999a), (Motyl, 2001)

In 2001, Susan E. Alcock, Terence N. D'Altroy, Kathleen D. Morrison and Carla M. Sinopoli jointly published *Empires. Perspectives from Archaeology and History*. This collection of papers on "imperial designs" dates from a conference held in 1997 and covers a range of imperial enterprises and making away with the Euro-centrism so far predominant. The collection is the only to explicitly attribute a legitimising

function to imperial discourse, in particular thanks to Thomas J. Barfield's contribution. (*Empires: Perspectives From Archaeology and History*, 2001)

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri published their much-discussed globalised reconsideration of the Marxist notion of Empire in their seminal *Empire* first published in 2000. They continued to elaborate on their worldview construct in *Multitude*, published in 2004 (Hardt & Negri, 2004/2005), and *Commonwealth*, published in 2009. (Hardt & Negri, 2009)

Deepak Lal's 2004 *In Praise of Empires*, while overcoming the old dichotomy between ancient and modern empires, provides a limited theoretical framework for the understanding of the term. (Lal, 2004)

In the same year, Alexei Miller and Alfred Rieber from the Central European University in Budapest published a collection of essays on "Imperial Rule". This collection includes a particularly relevant article by Miller on *The empire and the Nation in the Imagination of Russian Nationalism*. Miller explains present-day Russian nationalism looking at the Russian imperial "imaginary geography". (Miller, 2004) Rieber looks at the understandings of frontiers in the different Eurasian world orders. (Rieber, 2004)

A recent scholar on empire has been Mark R. Beissinger, Professor of Politics at Princeton University. (Beissinger, 2005) He is currently working at two further publications on empire: *Imperial Reputations: The Politics of Empire in a World of Nation-States* and *Empire by Reputation*, jointly written with Sarah Bush. The journal *Ab Imperio. Studies of New Imperial History and Nationalism in the Post-Soviet Space*, first published in June 2000, has been delivering quarterly discussions on empire theory.

Professor Josep Maria Colomer from Barcelona has collected his thoughts on empire in a recent short publication on the end of the nation-state (Colomer, 2007) and lectures in Georgetown University. (Colomer, 2008)

5.2. Definitions and Ideal-type Empires

The word, empire, conveys an idea of a vast territory, composed of various people; whereas that of kingdom, implies, one more bounded; and imitates the unity of that nation, of which it is formed.

John Trusler: *The Difference, Between Word, Esteemed Synonymous, in the English Language*, London 1766 (Osterhammel, 2002, p. 386)

Josep Colomer juxtaposes empires and states in terms of territorial elements:

1. Very large size vs. large or mid size
2. Absence of fixed or permanent boundaries vs. fixed territory and formal boundaries
3. A compound of diverse groups and territorial units vs. sovereignty
4. A set of multilevel, often overlapping jurisdictions vs. monopoly and homogenization (Colomer, 2008, pp. 52-53)

While this juxtaposition provides a rough idea of what empire is not, it is unsatisfactory in terms what empire actually is, how it is structured and perpetuated.

There is scholarly consensus on the three ideal-type characteristics of all empires.

Firstly, empires consist of a “core” and a “periphery”. Secondly, the core is the home of the ruling élite whereas the peripheries are governed by local élites dependent on the support of the core élite. Thirdly, the peripheries entertain relations with the outside and among themselves only through the core.

Doyle distinguished between three schools of theory on the driving forces behind empires. The first school uses a metropolitan, dispositional model. According to exponents of this school, i.e. Hobson, Lenin, Schumpeter, “empire is imperialism”.

Empire is a product of forces at the core, “metropolitan drives”, for external expansion. (Doyle, 1986, pp. 20-24) John A. Hobson’s 1902 *Imperialism. A Study* portrayed British imperialism as emanating from metropolitan Britain. Special interests encouraged aggressive foreign policy and the media and the educational institutions provided the imperialistic propaganda. Hobson argues that the root idea of empire in the ancient and medieval world as a federation of states covering the entire known world and its latter-day version of internationalism have been defeated by the rise of nationalisms. Imperialism for Hobson is a policy as an expression of nationalism. (Hobson, 1988, pp. 8-11) Imperialism therefore implies militarism, tendencies which “[involve] in their recoil a degradation of Western States and a possible *débâcle* of Western civilization”.²² (Hobson, 1988, p. 138) This nationalism serves as a veil for “selfish interests of certain industrial, financial, and professional classes, seeking private advantages out of a policy of imperial expansion” (Hobson, 1988, p. 196)

Lenin defined imperialism as the “monopoly stage of capitalism”. (Lenin, 1973, p. 105) Imperialism is not a policy, as in Hobson, but an inevitable stage in history. According to Lenin, monopolies have been the consequence of a high stage of development of the concentration of production. These monopolies have stimulated the seizure of the most important sources of raw materials, thus enormously increasing the power of big capital. Financial oligarchies control these monopolies, thus the creation of “finance capital”. The excess in finance capital brings about an export of capital. Imperialism is nothing but the struggle for spheres for the export

²² “Imperialism - whether it consists in a further policy of expansion or in the rigorous maintenance of all those vast tropical lands which have been ear-marked as British spheres of influence - implies militarism now and ruinous wars in the future. [...] The kingdoms of the earth are to be ours on condition that we fall down and worship Moloch.” (Hobson, 1988, p. 130)

of capital and for the sources of raw materials and inevitably intensifies the contradictions within capitalism. The accumulation of finance capital leads to the distinctive characteristic of imperialism, the emergence of “rentier states” living from the exploitation of the peripheries. (Lenin, 1973, pp. 148-150)

Schumpeter sees imperialism as the “objectless disposition of a state to unlimited forcible expansion” (Schumpeter, 1951, p. 7), a disposition originating in the historic residue of the corruption of true capitalism by an atavistic war machine. Imperialism is thus not a phenomenon of modernity, but as a residue persists from antiquity. Schumpeter adopts a historicist approach in identifying “warrior nations” and depicts

how internal struggles gave rise to a unified war organization behind which rallied all the popular forces - including those in the ideological sphere - a war machine that, once in motion, continued so long as there was steam behind it and it did not run up against a stone wall. (Schumpeter, 1951, p. 49)

In closing, for Schumpeter as for Hobson, imperialism is a formal imperialism, i.e. territorial conquest. Lenin’s vision of imperialism is of informal character, implying economic dependency rather than political control of the peripheries. All three share the view that “the roots of empire [are] in imperialism, a force emanating from the metropole like radio waves from a transmitter”. (Doyle, 1986, p. 24)

The second school sees the peripheries as impetus for imperialism. Gallagher and Robinson first raise this point in *The Imperialism of Free Trade* published in 1953. According to Robinson

at every stage [...] the working of imperialism was determined by the indigenous collaborative systems. [...] It should be emphasised that the Afro-

Asian crises which evoked [European] imperialism were often not essentially the products of European forces but of autonomous changes in African and Asian domestic politics. [...] [Its] European directors and agents, no less than its victims, looked on imperialism as an inevitable but random process receding out of control. (Robinson, 1976, pp. 147-148)

Others look at the so-called “frontier problem”, i.e. the core, while defensive in character, has to be expansive in effect in order to secure orderly interaction.

The third school is represented by mainstream realist IR theory adopting a systemic model. Kenneth Waltz argues that empire is only made possible by opportunities given within an international system. The three surpluses of people, of goods and of capital lead to imperialisms of swarming, of free trade and of monopoly capitalism, respectively. (Waltz, 2004, p. 26)

Doyle argues that the balance of power-theory provides a key to understanding the dynamics of imperialism stating that the anarchic structure of international politics induce states to maximise their relative power in order to be able to compete with other states. (Doyle, 1986, p. 27) Balance of power has been meticulously described by Stephen M. Walt in *The Origins of Alliances* (1987). He also describes the phenomenon of bandwagoning. The latter states that “States facing an eternal threat will ally with the most threatening power”. (Walt, 2005, p. 102) Whereas in the balance of power theory states aim at equal status - the famous comparison with billiard balls -, the bandwagoning theory implies the recognition of weaker states of their inferiority in power resources and their recognition of the necessity to subject itself to the dominion of a stronger state to guarantee subsistence. In these terms, imperial domination is a necessary result of relations between powerful and weak

Realist IR Theory allows for empire to exist only as informal empire. Formal empire is not seen as matter of IR theory as the latter is a question of domestic politics. Empire as a concept oscillates between the categories of international and domestic politics. Doyle provides five dimensions for these oscillations. (1) domain: the population affected; (2) scope: the type of behaviour influenced; (3) range of rewards and punishments; (4) weight, effectiveness; (5) duration. (Doyle, 1986, p. 35)

Even so, the question arises on how empire can be distinguished from mere hegemony. In Doyle's words

“the scope of imperial control involves both the process of control and its outcomes. Control is achieved either formally (directly or indirectly) or informally through influence over the periphery's environment, political articulation, aggregation, decision making, adjudication, and implementation, and usually with the collaboration of local peripheral elites. The scope of the outcomes covers both internal and external issues - who rules and what rules. Hegemony, by contrast, denotes control over external policy alone.” (Doyle, 1986, p. 40)

Alexander J. Motyl has provided a definition of empire that transcends Doyle's analysis. Motyl calls arrives at following definition:

Empires [...] are structurally centralized political systems within which core elites dominate peripheral societies, serve as intermediaries for their significant interactions, and channel resource and information flows from the periphery to the core and back to the periphery. (Motyl, 1999b, p. 128)

In describing the peculiarity of imperial formations, he adopts the metaphor of an “incomplete wheel” with hub and spokes, but no rim. The hubs and spokes are aspects common to any political system. The absence of a rim represents the absence of relations between the peripheral units. This interaction is subject to four rules laid down by Johan Galtung in his “structural theory of imperialism”. Firstly, the vertical interaction between core and periphery; secondly, missing interaction between periphery and periphery; thirdly, missing multilateral interaction between the three; fourthly, monopolization of interaction with the outside world by the core. The latter implies that the periphery units do not interact with other cores and that both core and peripheries do not interact with other peripheries in terms of another core’s peripheries. (Motyl, 1999a, p. 122) (Motyl, 2001, p. 16)

For the German historian Jürgen Osterhammel, pre-modern empires are defined by five structural principles: (1) the ability of an urban imperial centre to extract sufficient resources from an agrarian periphery to upkeep administration, priests and an imperial military force; (2) military and transport technologies allowing for distant projections of central power; (3) an imperial ideology arguing for the civilisation superiority of the centre; (4) voluntary co-optation by the periphery’s elite of the centre’s ideological symbols; (5) flexible frontiers. (Osterhammel, 2000, p. 226)

Thomas J. Barfield provides a deeper insight in arguing that empires share the following five internal characteristics²³:

Firstly, “empires are organized both to administer and exploit diversity, whether economic, political, religious, or ethnic.” (Barfield, 2001, p. 29) This explains why

²³ The past tense used in citations of Barfield and the present tense used in this thesis' elaboration of the former point to the assumption of this thesis that empires are not a thing of the past, neither relics of atavistic militarism in Schumpeter's terms nor phenomena reflecting the decay of capitalism in Lenin's, but a form of polity different from the Westphalian cognition of State.

élites can be replaced without the collapse of the imperial structure. Successful empires are thus able to exploit the diversity within them in terms of abstracting the attachment of the monopoly of power from the identification of a specific ruling élite (ethnicity, religious caste, economically dominant group..) to the élite able to perpetuate the system as a whole.

Secondly, “empires established transportation systems designed to serve the imperial center militarily and economically.” (Barfield, 2001, p. 30)

Transportation systems allowed for the establishment of stable trade contacts within the political stability of a *pax imperii*, therefore further economic ties between the core and the periphery and ultimately provide an economic interest both of the core and the periphery to perpetuate an imperial structure.

Thirdly, “empires had sophisticated systems of communication that allowed them to administer all subject areas from the center directly.” (Barfield, 2001, p. 31)

Communication is the essential requirement to ascertain the recognition of the core by the peripheries and the adaption of the peripheries to changes in the core. Communication requires a common code of understanding, such as, for instance, a *lingua franca*, a standardized record-keeping system, standardized measures and common numeral systems.

Fourth, “empires proclaimed a monopoly of force within the territories they ruled and projected their military force outward.” (Barfield, 2001, p. 32)

Empires cannot afford to maintain control of the peripheries through military power. The key to stability among the spokes is an effective and efficient administration. Barfield lists three possibilities of limits to imperial expansions. Firstly, an empire reached the frontiers of another empire or a force not to be subdued. Secondly, an

empire reaches an ecological frontier. Thirdly, an advance is forgone as part of a policy to create a defensible frontier. After this frontier, the costs exceed the benefit of administration. (Barfield, 2001, p. 32)

Fifth, “empires had an ‘imperial project’ that imposed some type of unity throughout the system.” (Barfield, 2001, p. 32)

Two strategies are at work here to reduce the costs of imperial administration and, more importantly, reducing the risks of “loosing a spoke”. Firstly, Empires with a common core of values, a civilizing project, tend to go through a process going from coercion of the peripheries through co-optation through cooperation finally to identification with the core.²⁴ Secondly, the “imperial project” involves relating it to “a series of cosmological and natural ‘constants’ against which [imperial] power might be stabilized, justified, explained, and understood.” (Woolf, 2001, p. 317)

5.3. Typologies of Empire

Alexander J. Motyl continues his metaphor of a wheel with hub and spokes but no rim in creating a basic distinction of empires. A first distinction is to be drawn at the length of the spokes. The wheel can have long spokes, far-flung overseas possession or short spokes, in vicinity to the core. A second distinction can be drawn according to the number of spokes. He calls empires with few short spokes “dense” or “continuous” and those with many long spokes “loose” or “discontinuous”. He follows David Lake in a third distinction, already mentioned, of type of authority between “formal” and “informal” empires. This produces following four possibilities:

²⁴ Woolf points to the important role of education in the “development of a consciousness of empire” (Woolf, 2001, p. 315) and one cannot but be reminded of Althusser’s insight into the legitimising power of education.

- (1) Formal authority - dense core-periphery relations
- (2) Formal authority - loose core-periphery relations
- (3) Informal authority - dense core-periphery relations
- (4) Informal authority - loose core-periphery relations

(Motyl, 1999a, pp. 128-129), (Motyl, 2001, pp. 18-20)

Barfield provides a more practical distinction between empires. He distinguishes between primary empires and “shadow” or secondary empires. The former share the five characteristics enumerated above of (1) an organization to administer and exploit diversity, (2) a transport system and large-scale economic integration, (3) unitary system of communication, (4) monopoly of force and outward projection of military force, (5) an “imperial project”. (Barfield, 2001, pp. 29-32) Shadow empires are secondary phenomena, “a response to imperial state formation some place else.” (Barfield, 2001, p. 33) These polities in their interaction with primary empires imitate the latter in policy and discourse without or only in part accounting for the five essential characteristics of primary empires. Barfield distinguishes between four types of secondary empires: “mirror empires”, “maritime trade empires”, “vulture empires” and “empires of nostalgia”.

Mirror empires echo an imperial state formation of their neighbours. The political structures of these polities at the margins of primary empires are more determined by their interaction with the primary empire than by any internal dynamics. Because of this “parasitic” dependency on the primary empire, mirror empires rarely were able to transform themselves into primary empires²⁵ and usually disappeared with the collapse of their adjacent primary empire.

²⁵ One example would be the Mongol empire in the 13th and 14th century AD.

Maritime trade empires actually control very little territory at the margins to extract economic benefits through trade. Their aim laid in achieving a monopoly over the means of transport. Their collapse was a consequence of the cutting off of their source of wealth.

Vulture empires were formed after the collapse of a primary empire. Peripheral leaders seize the core and form a new empire using the tools of the old primary empires. This phenomenon, it will be argued, has been a constant in Chinese history. With the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644, for instance, the Manchu from the north-eastern periphery established the new Qing dynasty at the old primary core and undergoing gradual Sinification.

Empires of nostalgia claim an imperial tradition and carries the symbolism of an extinct empire without accounting for the five characteristics of primary empires stated above. The importance of clinging to the old discourse lies in the ability to command customary loyalty relying on an established worldview. (Barfield, 2001, pp. 33-39)

A rare non-Marxist Chinese scholar on “empire” is professor Zhao Tingyang from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He differentiates between four patterns of empire: (1) The pattern of the Roman Empire corresponds to the typical ancient empire. It is a military superpower continually expanding until it eventually would encompass the world. Therefore its boundaries are but temporary frontiers. (2) The pattern of the British Empire corresponds to the typical modern empire. It is a nation/state led by a blend of nationalism, imperialism and colonialism. Boundaries do not indicate self-restraint, they rather safeguard its imperial interests against others. (3) The pattern of the American Empire is a new form of the modern empire. It

transformed direct control into a hidden, subtler control in political, economical terms, but also in terms of scientific knowledge. (4) The pattern of All-under-Heaven (天下), in Zhao's view, transcends the modern empire through globalisation and could also be called "globalism", i.e. an "institutionally ordered world or a world institution responsible to confirm the political legitimacy of world governance as well as local governance, and to allow the justification of system". It is less a political system than a "world view of world-ness", e.g. different from the internationality approach of the United Nations still focussed on nation-states. (Zhao, 2006, pp. 38-39)

For Zhao, *tianxia* "world governance" includes three elements: (1) "the earth", (2) "the hearts of the people", (3) "the world institution". (Zhao, 2006, p. 39)

5.4. Motyl's Cyclical Return of Imperial Discourse

"Historical continuity [is] a product of self-conscious construction."

Wang Hui (Wang, 2011a, p. 87)

Motyl looks into how empires end. For Motyl, empires evolve in response to forces such as modernization. Attrition is the end of empire through a growing incapacity of the core to mobilize sufficient peripheral resources for the maintenance of the whole system. Collapse is the end of empire through a rapid and comprehensive breakdown of the linkage binding peripheries and the core. Whereas attrition involves intra-systemic decay, collapse can be traced to extra-systemic shocks. Motyl lists five factors, which might cause a "re-imperialization" of where once was an imperial system. The first factor is regional instability, which seems quite intuitive.

The second factor is the multitude of revolutionary élites. “In pursuing revolution in the aftermath of imperial collapse leads revolutionaries to embrace state power and imperial revival”. (Motyl, 1999b, p. 132) In other words, revolutionaries adopt the policy of imperial revival because of its established attractiveness even more because universalistic aspirations of revolutionary ideologies tend to fit with the universalist claims pre-existent in the collapsed imperial formations. The third factor is the multitude of “imperial ideologies”, a dominant belief system with different degrees of “embeddedness” in the linguistic and institutional practices of the former core.²⁶ A fourth factor are the “abandoned brethren” no more included in one structured political entity, pointing at associative identities transcending the new cluster-states. A fifth factor, the only necessary condition among the five for successful re-imperialization is State capacity. State capacity entails both a coherent bureaucratic and coercive apparatus as well as sufficient material resources at disposal of the - probably new - state élite. The State capacity of the former core has to be seen in relation to the State capacities of the former periphery. The stronger the former peripheries, the harder will the re-imperialization by the former turn out to be. (Motyl, 1999b, pp. 129-136)

Collapse, according to Motyl, can occur at three different points of time within the lifeline of an empire: collapse of ascendant empires, collapse of empires at their height and collapse of empires in decay. The return to imperial aspirations is, according to Motyl, but a legitimisation strategy of post-imperial collapse élites appealing to cultural centrality without brute domination. Professor Zhao Tingyang, a present-day proponent of the *tianxia* imperial world order in China can indeed be

²⁶ One has to add the former peripheries here, especially when looking at “vulture empires” as described by Barfield.

seen representative of such a post-imperial collapse élite. In his article “Debating China’s Future”, he explains the collapse of the Zhou dynasty (1046 – 256 B.C.) as it becoming “a victim of its own idealism. And who is to underwrite *tianxia* – a system that rejects the very notion of a ‘chosen state’? Though originally a Chinese concept, China itself would seek no more than to be a part of any such system that might spring from it.” (Zhao, 2008)

5.5. Imperial Imaginary and Nation-State Identity

Although the logic of the modern bureaucratic state may be incompatible with that of empire, it does not follow that state elites actually have the capacity, wherewithal, or skills either to eliminate empire or to do so in a manner that will not aggravate core-periphery relations. (Motyl, 1977, p. 27)

Prasenjit Duara in his essay “Transnationalism and the Predicament of Sovereignty: China, 1900 – 1945” provides a cohesive understanding of the role of “transnational imaginings” in domestic politics. For Duara, “transnationalisms” are “lived realities or ideological constructions that transgress, though they do not always subvert, the territorial boundaries of the nation-state.” (Duara, 1997, p. 1030).

Duara distinguishes between two types of transnationalisms:

1. Modern, radical utopian ideologies tending to move away from transnationalism to internationalism (communism, anarchism)
2. “Redemptive transnationalisms” in search of the ultimate moral and spiritual community (Sun Yatsenism, Kang Youwei’s Morality Society) (Duara, 1997, pp. 1033-1034)

The distinction drawn by Duara basis itself on the form of the communicated message rather than the ends of the framework, i.e. to “domesticate transnationality”:

“When nationalists deployed their narratives to nationalize transnationals, they revealed the constructedness of nationalist ideology that had to be taken apart in order to separate out the narratives of race, culture, and native place from their “natural” belonging in the territorial nation-state. (Duara, 1997, p. 1049)

Nationalists first have to engage transnational discourses to establish a bond. Then they have to turn the loyalties of “sojourners” back to the geobody by appropriating or inflecting older cultural discourses to create sentiments of rootedness in the new territorial entity.

These nationalists have to use the cultural discourses with an unfaltering understanding of their relative superiority and the vital moral necessity to spread that superior culture in order to appeal to their core target group(s). This cultural superiority thus serves as the cohesive bond of unity, eventually necessitating political unity. But this cultural superiority also necessitates its continued promulgation to avoid the disintegration of the basic assumptions of this culturally founded political unity. In other words, this transnational cultural mission cannot be abandoned without abandoning the cultural argument for the “national” unity.

In terms of elite rhetoric Osterhammel provides eight distinctive differences between imperial and nation-state identity (Osterhammel, 2002, pp. 382-384), which lead to eight ideal-type distinctions between nation-state and imperial legitimising discourse: (1) The nation-state has defined borders, whereas the empire does not. The frontier mentality means that the ‘wilderness’ or barbarians’ outside imperial domain are not

to be seen as equals in terms of their evolutionary stage towards “culture”, “socialism” or “democracy”.²⁷ (2) The nation-state cherishes its homogeneity, whereas the empire cherishes its “tolerant” diversity. (3) Whereas nation-states as homogenous communities tend to legitimise the state structure through the common will of its members (i.e. from below), empires tend to legitimise the state structure through their élite cultural progress and their civilising mission (i.e. from above). (4) Nation-states tend to praise the commonality and equality of all “citizens”, whereas empires have a hierarchical understanding of belonging in accordance to ethnical and cultural distance to the “pure” centre. (5) Whereas nation-states cherish the emphasis of national tradition, empires distinguish between central (“great”) traditions and peripheral (“little”) traditions. The tolerance towards the plurality of “little traditions” thus reflects the magnanimity of the centre. Empires thus *have to* give the allure of tolerance. (6) Whereas nation-states emphasise the equality between nation-states in disregard of any cultural, ethnical aspects, the sense of civilizational superiority of the imperial central élite is expressed by a sense of duty to spread that civilizational superiority beyond the frontiers, denying the recognition equality to international relations. (7) Whereas the nation-state recalls ancient common roots as the origin of its existence, imperial historiography often emphasises either imperial continuity from older ideal imperial designs (Arcadia, the age of Yao and Shun) or from a moment of spiritual foundation (the American Revolution, the October Revolution). (8) Whereas the nation-state is intimately linked to a certain territory (French “soil”), the empire sees territory as a mere surface for its *mission civilisatrice*. Territory can turn

²⁷ Medieval European geographers commonly marked the white spots on their maps with the slogans *hic sunt leones* („here are lions“)

barbarian, antidemocratic or into *dar-al-harb* not by its own essence, but rather through the civilizational changes of the population inhabiting it.

In his article “Debating China’s Future”, he states in regards to China:

According to Chinese philosopher Tsinghua professor Wang Hui “the dominance of the nation-state in Asian imaginaries arose from the empire/nation-state binary created in modern Europe.” (Wang, 2011a, p. 60) This binary saw modernity, whether in Iceland, in the Chad or in Laos defined by the Westphalian system of pretended assumption of global acceptance of the nation-state as the basis for any inter-state-structure discourse. This modernity was opposed and supposed to substitute pre-modernity defined by imperial designs and indeed has become the dominant political structure. In terms of discourse, élite legitimacy still very much clings to their *missions civilisatrices* of old and looks into pre-modern imperial discursive repertoires of cultural superiority to legitimise present-day state structures through these. The repudiation of pre-modern imperial designs within a non-moral world order of sovereign nation-states has obscured their very relevance to the identity of 21st century élite legitimacy and their need for “moral” justness. In terms of the Asian post-colonial experience, Wang Hui is optimistic in terms of the reappraisal of pre-modern state-structures:

“The question is: in an era in which the nation-state has become the dominant political structure, will the traditional Asian experiences of various types of communication, coexistence, and institutions provide possibilities with which to overcome internal and external dilemmas brought about by the nation-state system? (Wang, 2011a, p. 60)

While Wang Hui sees good things at the end of a continuous erosion of the nation-state in the future, he ignores the role the reappraisal of “traditional [political] experiences” plays within legitimising discourse right now. In his study on India’s role in the Victorian concept of empire, John MacKenzie concludes, that the imperial notion existed “in an elaborate sham of outward show”. (MacKenzie, 1999, p. 132) I would argue that it is rather “an elaborate sham of *inward* show”. Imperial, i.e. moral (cultural, ethical) discourses beyond the nation-state are and continue to be a necessary part of nation-state legitimacy, because these discourses touch the very identity of the members of the nation-state communities²⁸. They are all the more imperative more multi-ethnic states such as China and cannot be abandoned without negating the very core worldviews of the communities they embrace.

²⁸ Armitage quotes Hegel on the question of British identity: “*fragt am einen Engländer, so wird jeder von sich und seinen Mitbürgern sagen, sie seien die, die Ostindien und das Weltmeer beherrschen, den Welthandel besitzen, Parlament und Geschworenengerichte haben usf. Diese Taten machen das Selbstgefühl des Volkes aus.*“ (Armitage, 1999, p. 91)

6. The Origins of the Confucian Political Imaginary

6.1. Literature Review

The literature on the history of Chinese foreign relations conventionally distinguish between “traditional”, “ancient”, “old” history and “modern”, “new” history, the latter starting either at the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911/12 or the founding of the new China in 1949. Traditional foreign relations, because of their universalist nature, are not necessarily only studied in the fields of world or Chinese history, but also from a political science perspective e.g. looking at a period’s political thought. There are also different designations and understandings for the international system of which China deemed itself to be the centre: “tributary system” (朝贡体制), “tributary state system” (朝贡国制度), “imperial feudal system” (封朝制度), “feudal system” (册封体制), “the heavenly dynasty’s system of rule through rites” (天朝礼治体系), “the order between China and the barbarians” (华夷秩序), “the order of all under heaven (*tianxia*)” (天下秩序).

John K. Fairbank and Ssu-yu Teng (Fairbank, 1942) published a first systemic analysis of the *tianxia*-system in Qing dynasty in 1941. They extended their research to the first years of the Chinese republic in a further publication in 1954 (Teng & Fairbank, 1954) and a more specific chapter on the Qing dynasty tributary system in a publication in 1960 (Fairbank & Teng, 1960). In 1968 John K. Fairbank edited a major work collection on essays on the Chinese world order. (Fairbank, 1974).

In China, many publications have appeared in regards to the history of political thought in China and the history of foreign relations in China, the first probably

being Ding Qian's series of analyses of foreign relations in his *Collection of geographical studies from the study room of the abode of the Immortals* published in 1915 by Zhejiang Publishing House. (Chen, 2007, p. 2) The amount of studies published covering one or the other aspect of the *tianxia* world order as a pre-modern system of oppression is substantial. In regards to the influence of the old imperial ideology on present-day China, the studies in have been few and all foreign. It is interesting to note how Marxist historiography saw the "theory of the mandate of heaven" (天命论) as an "ideological weapon" (理论武器) part of the ideological superstructure of the feudal society. (Zhou, 2007, p. 27) There is consensus until recently that after the *xinbai*-revolution of 1911/12 and the Communist takeover 1949 this "ideological weapon" only has historical relevance, a point disputed only by contemporary Chinese philosophers such as Zhao Tingyang (赵汀阳) (Zhao, 2005) and Wang Hui (Wang, 2011a), IR scholars such as Yan Xuetong (阎学通) (Yan, 2011) and their foreign observers such as William Callahan (Callahan, 2008) and Daniel Bell (Bell, 2010).

6.2. The Beginnings of a Moral World Order Nostalgia

The Mystical Origins

The mystical origins of the *tianxia* world order are documented in the classical foundations of Chinese philosophy dating from the Spring and Autumn period (771 – 453 B.C.) and the Warring States period (475 – 221 B.C.) covering the about the 500 years preceding the "unification of all under heaven" under the First Emperor of Qin (秦始皇).

The concept of *tian* (天), heaven, according to Arthur Waley

“corresponds to our word Heaven and to the German *Himmel* in the sense of Providence, Nature, God. Heaven is the dispenser of life and death, wealth and rank. The *chün-tzu* [君子] learn to know the will (*ming*) of Heaven and submit to it patiently.” (Waley, 1949, pp. 41-42)

The different schools of thought emerging in the Warring States period (475 – 221 B.C.), Confucianism, Taoism, Legalism share the belief that the state of all under heaven is in disarray and thus created an imaginary nostalgic memory of a period prior to the chaos and war of their time. The nostalgia rests on the mythological tale of “unity and harmony at the beginning of time”. (Yates, 2001, p. 358)

The story below is thus a story created and mutated in the 7th to 2nd centuries B.C. and is permeated with vocabulary, geographical knowledge and attitudes toward society of that time.

The origins are traced back to three *huang* (皇), here inadequately translated as mythological god-like rulers, and the five *di* (帝), mythological ancestor-rulers of tribes in the Yellow River valley, two of which were to be the founders of the Chinese culture: Yandi (炎帝) and Huangdi (黄帝).

Yandi is also known as Shennong (神农), the mythological founder of agriculture and pottery. Huangdi conquered the tribes of Yandi, this unification of the two tribal alliances is regarded as the founding of the Chinese or *huaxia* (华夏) culture (Fan, 2006, p. 10). The story of the very creation of the Chinese culture is thus a story of unified diversity.

The rulers of the *huaxia* alliance of tribes apparently exercised political/administrative power in a very limited sense, whereas the single tribes enjoyed wide-ranging autonomy. The ruler's concerns were the administration of the land, an educational function, the rites, and punishment. The rites are to be understood as the consistent practise of a ritualistic conversation with Heaven, in which Heaven is to be pleased and its will to be communicated. The ruler of the *huaxia* alliance of tribes, seen as the *tianzi* (天子), or Son of Heaven, had a monopoly on communicating with Heaven. (Fan, 2006, p. 12)

The etymological roots of the term *huaxia* (华夏) can be traced to Zhou dynasty relics, where the term had a geographical connotation as well as an ethnic-cultural one. It firstly denoted the area of settlement of the Zhou and secondly juxtaposed the cultured (华, *hua*) people of Xia to the “barbarians”. The latter were distinguished according to their geographical position relative to the *huaxia*: *dongyi* (东夷) in the East, *xirong* (西戎) in the West, *nanman* (南蛮) in the South and *beidi* (北狄) in the North. (Liu & Huang, 2006, p. 529) Cultures outside the *huaxia* alliance of tribes were seen as barbarians as they were not deemed to reach the cultural standards of the *huaxia*. (Chen, 2004, p. 186)

The mythological story continues with the reigns of Yao (尧) and Shun (舜) as rulers of the *huaxia* alliance of tribes. They were revered in later times, partly because they each voluntarily passed on their power to another able man or man elected by the alliance of tribes. (Liu & Huang, 2006, p. 523) After a great flood in the last years of the reign of Shun, his servant Yu (禹) tamed the rivers and was rewarded with the

stewardship of the *huaxia* alliance of tribes, because his success in taming the rivers showed Heaven's goodwill.

The *shangshu* (尚书), also called the *Book of Documents*, a classical collection of documentary records related to ancient history, in the chapter *yugong* (禹贡) states that Yu received his right to rule from Heaven (or at least assumed it with Heaven's assent):

皇天眷命，奄有四海，为天下君。

Heaven favoured you [Yu] with this appointment; you command the four seas and become the ruler of all under heaven.

Yu due to his virtue becomes the “son of Heaven” (天子, *tianzi*) who has a “mandate from Heaven” (天命, *tianming*) to rule all under Heaven.

According of the *yugong*, Yu divided the central lands under his rule into nine administrative areas or *zhou* (州), the lands outside the immediate domain of the ruler's capital were also divided into five circular domains or *fu* (服) each five hundred distance units *li* further away from his immediate domain. These peripheral domains constitute a hierarchy reflecting the intensity of cultural radiation from the centre as well as the intensity of interaction with the centre in terms of tribute. The farther away a place is, the less cultured it is. (Ge, 2008, pp. 7-8) It was assumed that all under Heaven is subordinated to the *tianzi*'s mandate, yet the existence of barbarian cultures on the outer edges of the “world” less exposed to the cultural superiority of the *huaxia* is recognized. The *shiji* (史记), the *Records of the Great Historian*, written in around 100 B.C. by the Han dynasty historian Sima Qian as well

as the *yugong* mention tribute being brought by these barbarians to the *tianzi*. They “confirm” the legitimacy of Yu’s mandate, as Yu is able to unite all under Heaven: practise the rites and receive tribute symbolising submission of the peripheral barbarians confirming their recognition *huaxia* supremacy. Of course, as will be shown below, this is but part of the discourse of the Warren States period and later and does not have any historical documentary value. (Zeng, 2008, p. 54)

Yu recommended his son to succeed him, who eventually stopped the tradition of handing over power to the most able successor and instead established China’s first hereditary dynasty, the Xia dynasty.

Archaeologists have not yet been able to conclusively prove the existence of the Xia dynasty except in mythology, where its founding is of fundamental importance as a symbolic moment of transition from one archetype of society to another. The period before the establishment of the Xia dynasty is known as the “state of the Great Unity” (大同之世). (Fan, 2006, p. 14) The *lijì* (礼记), *Book of Rites*, a collection of texts from ancient times to the Zhou dynasty said to be collected by Confucius, in the chapter *liyùn* (礼运), on the *Conveyance of Rites*, describes the state of Great Unity as follows:

大道之行也，天下为公。选贤与能，讲信修睦，故人不独亲其亲，不独子其子，使老有所终，壮有所用，幼有所长，矜寡孤独废疾者，皆有所养男有分，女有归货恶其弃于地也，不必藏于己；力恶其不出于身也，不必为己是故谋闭而不兴，盗窃，乱贼而不作，故外户而不闭，是谓大同。

When the great *dao* [i.e.: the ultimate principle, the grand course] was pursued, a communal spirit ruled *tianxia*, men of talents and ability were chosen, the words were sincere, harmony was cultivated. Men did not only treat relatives as relatives and their sons only as their sons. The aged were cured until death, the able-bodied had proper employment, the young were allowed to grow up properly. Kindness was shown to widows, orphans, disabled and the sick. Men had their duties and women had theirs. They disliked goods to be wasted, but they did not stockpile them. They disliked when labour could not be exerted, but they exerted it not only to their own advantage. Schemes were prevented and could not succeed. Thieves and rebels were not seen and the doors were kept open. This is what is called the *datong*.

The establishment of the Xia dynasty as the first (mythological) hereditary dynasty marked the passage from *tianxia wei gong* (天下为公), where “all under heaven is ruled by a communal spirit” or else put “all under heaven is for the public good” to *tianxia wei jia* (天下为家), where „all under heaven is ruled by kinfolk spirit“ or else put „all under heaven is for the kinfolk’s good“. The *lijì* describes the passage as a fundamental societal change:

大道既隱，天下為家。各親其親，各子其子，貨力為己。

The great *dao* has now been obscured, all under Heaven is ruled by kinfolk spirit. Everyone loves his own relatives, everyone loves his own children, wealth and power are used for one’s own good.

According to the *lijun* chapter the Great Unity has thus been abandoned and a new era, called the „well off society“ or the „society of small tranquillity“ (小康):

以正君臣，以笃父子，以睦兄弟，以和夫妇，以设制度，以立田里，以贤勇知，以功为己。[...] 未有不谨于礼者也，以着其义，以考其信，着有过，刑仁讲让，示民有常。如有不由此者，在势者去，众以为殃，是谓小康。

Justice defines the relationship between ruler and minister, sincerity between father and son, harmony between siblings, community between husband and wife, in accordance to this the system is established, the fields are laid out, superiority is given to men of courage and wisdom, to secure achievement for the own. [...] None was not observant to the rites, to secure the display of righteousness, the realisation of sincerity, the exhibition of errors, the exemplification of benevolence, and the discussion of courtesy, showing the people all the regular virtues. Any rulers who did not follow this course were driven away by the powerful, and the people regarded them as pests. This is what is called the *xiaokang*.

It is noteworthy that the discourse already implies a perception universal centrality of the *huaxia* tribal alliance, for the change from a meritocratic to a dynastic body politic leads to societal changes in “all under Heaven” (*tianxia*). Li Yunquan notes that there are two levels of consciousness of the *huaxia* alliance of tribes seen in the historical texts, which happened to be compiled much later: geographical and cultural centrality. (Li, 2005, p. 111) (Fan, 2006, p. 14)

The Historical Origins

The mythological Xia dynasty was succeeded by the archeologically documented Shang dynasty, originally a Western barbarian tribe, which after occupying the central lands of the Xia adopted the legitimatising discourse of the mandate of heaven. The *Book of Documents* claims to have preserved a speech by Shang Tang (商汤), the ruler of Shang who defeated the last “despot” of the Xia:

王曰：格尔众庶，悉听朕言，非台小子，敢行称乱！有夏多罪，天命殛之。今尔有众。汝曰：我后不恤我众，舍我穡事而割正夏？予惟闻汝众言，夏氏有罪，予畏上帝，不敢不正。今汝其曰：夏罪其如台？夏王率遏众力，率割夏邑。有众率怠弗协，曰：时日曷丧？予及汝皆亡。夏德若兹，今朕必往。

The king said, “Come people, listen to my words. It is not I, the little child, who dare to bring chaos; but for the many crimes of the [ruler of] Xia, heaven has given the charge to destroy him.” Now you say, “Our ruler does not compassionate us, but takes us away from husbandry to attack and rectify Xia.” I have heard the words of you; [but] the sovereign of Xia is guilty, and I fear the gods, I dare not but rectify [the Xia]. Now you are saying, “What are the crimes of Xia to us?” The ruler of Xia exhausts the strength of the people, and oppresses in the cities of Xia. The people become entirely indifferent and feel no bond of union and say, “When will this the sun expire? We will perish with you.” Such is the moral behaviour of the Xia, now I must go [and rectify].

Again, the story of the replacement of the Xia by the Shang is probably not one that was created at that point in time, but rather a product of later, Warren States' thought. Shang Tang, humbly referring to himself as "the little child", apparently had no choice but to follow the orders of Heaven without actually having any aspirations to power. The reason behind the loss of the mandate of Heaven (*tianming*) is narrated as the oppressive behaviour of the Xia in regards to their people. (Li, 2005, p. 11)

The Shang themselves did not see their rulers as qualified to communicate directly with the High God (*shangdi*, 上帝), but rather through the good offices of their ancestors, hence the vital importance of ancestor worship rituals in the search for cosmic harmony. (Loewe, 2002, p. 343) The ruler's monopoly on communications with the High God was strengthened in the succeeding Zhou dynasty.

When the Zhou (1056 – 256 B.C.) replaced the Shang, the Zhou claimed to share ancestral identity with the Xia. According to Chen Zhi, "aside from the religious belief in Heaven as the supreme moral will, the Zhou people's ancestral identity with the Xia provided them with another proof, non-theological but related to their theological purpose, to illustrate their legitimate access to Heaven and power. (Chen, 2004, p. 190). The term *huaxia* first appears in the Zhou dynasty text *wucheng* in *shujing*. Kong Anguo explains in his 2nd century A.D. commentary, that *hua* denotes official caps and robes in a flowery style and *xia* a vast state. (Chen, 2004, p. 190) The Qing dynasty scholar Wang Yinzhi notes a phonetic connection in the etymology of *xia* and *ya* (雅), i.e. elegant. (Chen, 2004, p. 193) The Zhou, in their territorial expansion created a first historically documented "culturally oriented ethnic identity" as a basis to their claims to rule.

The Zhou could not preserve their political power in the later half of their rule, known as the Warring States period, and eventually merely held a ritual supreme role among several other states. The Zhou ruler symbolically held on to the *tianming* and the Warring States accepted this role until the state of Qin conquered the Zhou and established the so-called first Chinese empire in 221 B.C. (Fairbank & Reischauer, 1960, p. 87)

It was in the period of the Warring States prior to Qin unification 221 B.C. when transmitted knowledge about the past rulers of the *huaxia*, from the mythological origins to the symbolic rule of the Zhou, was adopted and merged into a systematic cosmic order, which legitimised struggles for supremacy among states in the Warring States and made dynastic change a cosmic necessity. The Zhou could not preserve the harmony of *tianxia* and thus the aspirants to the *tianming* were to put themselves into the same position Shang Tang was in when he brought down the Xia.

The philosophers of the so-called “hundred schools of thought” at the various local courts of the pre-Qin period provided the ideological frameworks to justify the imperial aspirations and the state of Qin eventually was to prevail in 221 B.C. Some scholars such as Ge Jianxiong think the *yugong* text originated in the very state of Qin prior to 221 B.C. (Ge, 2008, p. 8)

Even if the *yugong* had not been a Qin text, its content reflects a shared wish for peace expressed in the nostalgia for an imaginary past of harmony and ritual unity. As Ge Jianxiong notes, “the system of the nine *zhou* was but a plan for the future, the system of the five *fu* was but the idealisation of the past”. (Ge, 2008, p. 9)

The legitimising role of the creational mythology was already well established when the Qin unification was completed in 221 B.C. as the principal different schools of

thought built on it from the very beginning. Taoists like Laozi and Zhuangzi opposed all human institutions and societal order as they preached the transcendence of distinctions to reach ultimate harmony with nature. Their concept of *tian* was thus while omnipresent linked to spontaneity and primordial simplicity. The ideal ruler should reflect this primordial state.

The Moists like Mozi saw society organised in a hierarchical order, with the most virtuous man chosen to carry out the will of Heaven. Moists denied the importance of rites and saw pragmatic self-sacrifice as a virtue. The Legalists, the students of Xunzi, such as Han Feizi and Su Si, saw the human essence as essentially evil. The rites are the only means to rectify human behaviour. The rulers role is to keep order in *tianxia*. Adherents to the the Yin-Yang school, such as Zou Yan (驺衍) was an eclectic blend of Confucian, Taoist teachings with an elaborate system of cosmology, which while eventually losing its independent status, survived in popular beliefs and influenced greatly later understandings of Confucianism. (Liu, 1998, pp. 11-12) Confucianism itself was moulded by the creational mythology, but its pillars of values (virtue, righteousness, filial piety) prevailed above the other schools in the shaping of the Chinese cultural and political history.

Liu distinguished between three meanings of Confucianism:

1. Spiritual Confucianism: the philosophy of Confucius, Mencius, Cheng Zhu, Lu Wang untainted by popular amalgamations and political adaptations
2. Politicized Confucianism: the fundamental ideological framework to imperial China as defined in the Western Han dynasty.

3. Popular Confucianism: Confucian values and beliefs at the grassroots level, hardly to be separated from other sets of values and beliefs originating in Buddhism or Taoism (Liu, 1998, p. 14) and arguably Christianity.

The politicized Confucianism was shaped by a later conscious choice of Confucian wisdoms suitable to the legitimising needs of the power. The Neo-Confucian scholar Du Weiming (杜维明) refers to the politicized Confucianism as *rujiao zhongguo*, defining it as „the mentality of politicised Confucian ethics as the dominating thought in Chinese traditional feudal society as well as all kinds of its contemporary distorted expressions. (Bresciani, 2001, p. 410)

Thanks to Shang Yang's legalist administrative reforms and its favourable geographical position in the Wei river valley, the state of Qin was able to defeat the united forces of the five northern states and soon later defeated the southern state of Chu. By 256 B.C. the central state of Zhou was conquered by Qin. By 221 B.C. the ruler of Qin has succeeded in conquering the remaining warring states and adopted the title *Shi Huangdi* (始皇帝), often translated as the “First Emperor”. He united the characters for the three *huang* (皇), the mythological god-like rulers, and the five *di* (帝), mythological ancestor-rulers of tribes in the Yellow River valley, to give legitimacy to his new role tracing back his role to ancient times and lay the foundations for a “universal and ever-lasting empire”. (Fairbank & Teng, 1960, p. 87)

He reformed the land ownership, combined the northern defensive walls to what eventually became known as the “Great Wall of China” and incorporated southern “barbarian” peoples outside the Yellow River valley as far as present-day northern Vietnam. “China” or the radiating “Middle Kingdom” (*zhongguo*) “for the first time began to approximate its present borders” (Fairbank & Teng, 1960, pp. 88-90)

Inscriptions on relics document Qin Shihuang boasting of being the first to have held sway over the world ever since the reigns of the five *di*. (Loewe, 1994, p. 15) But the dynasty was to crumble under the lack of loyalty by the local aristocracies, the lack of sympathy for the harsh legalist system of rule and discontent caused by the heavy burdens of taxation and *corvée* imposed on the overall population within a few years after the death of the “First Emperor”.

6.1. The Origin of Confucian State Ideology

A power struggle between southern rebel leader Xiang Yu (232 – 202 B.C.) and the general Liu Bang (256 – 195 B.C.) ended in favour of the latter and had him found the Han dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D., interrupted by the Xin interregnum 9-23 A.D.) Liu Bang, also known under his posthumous title Han Gaozu (汉高祖) or the Venerable Ancestor, was a peasant and low-level official before joining Xiang Yu as a rebel and eventually turning against him. He was unconnected to any of the ruling clans of the Warring States. His humble background allowed him to be more pragmatic and consolidate the Han power within his lifetime after a short period of tactical retreat. He claimed that the world formed a single family thus arguing that his rule was not that of a temporary despot but rather the natural course of development. Gaozu, restored the centralised administration the First Emperor had created. This required a vast bureaucracy in the capital as well as a rudimentary system of provincial supervising officials. In order to keep in check the old local aristocratic élites, Gaozu recruited his officials from all those with enough social and financial capital to be able to attain a position of power and had regional inspectors travel through the Han-Empire. According to Fairbank and Reischauer “we already see the

old distinction between hereditary aristocrat and commoner transformed into a cleavage between officialdom and the common taxpayer.” (Fairbank & Teng, 1960, p. 97)

Gaozu in terms of foreign policy secured the gains of the Qin in the South. In the North the Han were confronted by the *xiongnu* (匈奴) Turkish nomads repeatedly raiding Northern China. The Han confronted the *xiongnu* with the so-called *heqin*-policy (和亲): entertaining the chieftains, giving gifts as well as Han princesses in marriage. According to Fairbank and Goldman,

„Nomad warriors learned that if they performed a ritual at Chang'an [the Han capital] in which they accepted Han suzerainty, they could profit substantially“ (Fairbank & Goldman, 1991/2006, p. 61)

The Han, instead of engaging the *xiongnu* in costly military expeditions, had their leaders come to their courts, appease them with (less costly but lavish) gifts and at the same time have the *xiongnu* publicly practise the Han worship rituals, which to the Han equalled cultural submission. The imaginary submission not only had a foreign policy agenda, but also an internal one. The *tianzi* maintains his mandate by successfully extending the reach of the *huaxia* culture to most brute barbarians.

As for this rituals Sima Qian's *shiji* documents a conversation between Gaozu and his emissary to the courts in now Northern Vietnam, in which reaction upon Lu Jia's continuous praise of the *shijing* and the *shujing*, Gaozu says: “When I conquered *tianxia* on horse [i.e. militarily], I have never seen the *shijing* and the *shujing*!” Lu Jia replies: “*tianxia* can be conquered on horse, but can it be governed on horse? This was the reason for the downfall of the Qin.” Gaozu had his officials create a set of

rituals adopted from Zhou and Qin times, where Heaven and the Liu clan ancestors were revered. (Fan, 2007, p. 52) Gaozu and his immediate successors saw their role as *tianzi* according to the so-called *Huanglao*-school (黄老), following the example of three *huang* of antiquity and Taoist thought of the Warring States' philosopher Laozi. According to the contemporary classic *huainanzi* (淮南子) the modus of government is to *wu wei* (无为, no action) or *wei wu wei* (为无为, action without action) and its objective is to let the populace live an undisturbed, simple live. (Fan, 2007, p. 53) Gaozu and his successor saw a “correlative cosmology” (Fairbank & Goldman, 1991/2006, p. 64) of mutual influence between the *tian*, the world of nature and human society. Correlative thought is not unique to China but it continued to exercise its high degree of influence because of the centripetal, hierarchical view of society with the *tianzi* at its peak communicating with the *tian* through rituals.

The seventh emperor of the Han dynasty remembered by his posthumous name Han Wudi (汉武帝, the Martial Emperor) reigned from 141 to 87 B.C. Under the reign the Han reach their peak in terms of geographical expansion: Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Yunnan, northern Vietnam were brought under Chinese suzerainty. To the Northwest, Wudi drove the *xiongnu* tribes out of the Ordos regions as far as to the Gobi. Chinese armies crossed the Tarim Basin to subdue the region of Ferghana. As a result, the former Greek kingdom of Sogdiana was conquered in 42 B.C.. In Korea, Wudi - in order to outflank the *xiongnu* - subdued the Choson, a semi-sinicized Korean state in northern Korean and southern Manchuria and founded a military garrison, which eventually became present-day Pyongyang. In terms of actual governance, Wudi was a legalist ruler just like the First Emperor of Qin, but in terms of political theory his rule was a milestone in the

evolution of political Confucianism. Wudi had his scholars look into the old schools of thought of the Warring States period to legitimize his rule over *tianxia* and dutifully performed the transmitted rites of sacrifice to Heaven and Earth at Mount Tai. The *wuwei* ideal of the *tianzi* did not fit well with his massive expansion and the great resettlements. What was needed was a portrayal of the *tianzi*'s conquests as "conscious and purposeful activity as a moral agent" (Loewe, 2002, p. 345). The *taixue* (太学), imperial academy, was established in the capital Chang'an and smaller educational institutions were set up in regional districts to study the "five classics" (The Classic of Poetry, the Classic of History, the Classic of Rites, the Classic of Changes and the Spring and Autumn Annals) of pre-Qin thought to be collected and compiled by Confucius. This is the first time court scholars became exclusively identified with Confucianism. Scholarly conferences were held to determine the true interpretation of the five classics and in 175 A.D. the imperial administration of the Eastern Han had approved versions of the classics carved on large stone tables erected in the then capital Luoyang. (Fairbank & Teng, 1960, pp. 106-107) Within this context, the work *chunqiu fanlu* (春秋繁露) or *Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals*, an interpretation of the *gongyangzhuan* (公羊传) commentary of the Spring and Autumn Annals attributed the Confucian scholar Dong Zhongshu (董仲舒, 179 – 104 B.C.) the theory of *dayitong* (大一统), the Great Unification, was once again suggested as an ideal state of the world, but this unification is to be based on the moral standards of the Confucian classics:

春秋大一统者，天地之常经，古今之通谊也。

The great unification of the Spring and Autumn period, heaven and earth were in order, is suitable both to the past and the present times.

诸不在六艺之科，孔子之术者，皆绝其道，勿使并进。

Everything that follow the wisdom of the six arts and the teachings of Confucius should be denied dissemination and practise.

Dong Zhongshu, sometime between 136 and 134 B.C., was invited to pronounce ‘the essentials of the Great Way’ of kingly rule at the court of Han Wudi. Dong’s responses to questions by Wudi are recorded in three memorials in his biography in the *hanshu* (“History of the Han dynasty”). Dong elaborated on the *tianzhi*’s role in sustaining the cosmic order. (Nylan, 2008, pp. 50-51)

While the study of the Confucian classics was thus officially sanctioned, the other schools of thought continued to develop in a non-political context. As for the question why Confucianism prevailed over Legalism in an environment of effective centralisation and military expansion, Fairbank argues, “the Confucian tradition was the chief intellectual force among the educated classes” (Fairbank & Teng, 1960, p. 107), from which the imperial aristocracy was recruited. They probably saw the position of the Confucian ideal ruler, the *jun* (君), guided by righteousness above them and a hierarchical society among and below them as advantageous to their own position. According to Liu Junping and Huang Deyuan,

“the meaning of heaven is Confucianism, Confucianism is the will of heaven. Saying the heavenly order limits the powers of the emperor actually means that the Confucian order limits the powers of the emperor.” (Liu & Huang, 2006, p. 37)

The later Western Han emperor Chengdi (成帝, 51 B.C. – 7 B.C.) stressed that while Heaven had given birth the human race, its members were not intuitively capable of maintaining order, this is why Heaven mandated rulers to keep the human race under control. (Loewe, 1994, p. 16) Shortly thereafter Wang Mang (王莽, 45 B.C. – 23 A.D.) overthrew the Western Han dynasty and founded the Xin dynasty (9 – 23 A.D.). Wang Mang had to explain why the Han had lost the *tianming* and he could assume it according to the Confucian orthodoxy. According to Michael Loewe, “Wang Mang was the first of China’s emperors to claim that his legitimacy derived from the Mandate”. (Loewe, 2002, p. 347)

Of course the philosophers of the Warring States period had already argued in their creational myths that the mandate of Heaven can be lost and given to a more suitable clan. Arbuckle traced back the confirmation of this view in political Confucian orthodoxy to Dong Zhongshu. The *qianhanshu* (前汉书), “History of the Former Han Dynasty”, documents the story of one Sui Hong (眭弘), who saw the loss of the *tianming* announced in an omen, sent a messenger to the Han court to announce the big news and was executed along with the later.

Sui Hong according to the *hanshu* is recorded to have said:

先师董仲舒有言，虽有继体守文之君，不害圣人之受命。汉家尧后，有传国之运。汉帝宜谁差天下，求索贤人，袒以帝位，而退自封百里，如殷周二王。

“There was a saying of former teacher Dong Zhongshu that although there be a prince who inherited form and held to refinement, he could not hinder a sage from receiving the Mandate. The House of Han is heir to Yao, and it has

the cyclical destiny of passing on the state [peacefully]. It would be proper for the Han emperor to make a searching inquiry throughout all-under Heaven, to discover a worthy and wise man to whom he can abdicate the imperial throne and retire, enfeoffing himself with a [a state of] hundred *li* [square], like the heirs of the two kings of Yin [i.e. Shang] and Zhou, thereby to accept and comply with the Mandate of Heaven.“ (Arbuckle, 1995, p. 589)

Dong Zhongshu had been less naive and had argued that the while the three dynasties Xia, Shang and Zhou had had their imperfections, these imperfections were only there to repair deficiencies in the order of *tianxia*. While thus implicitly acknowledging a necessary dynastic succession, he did not commit the high treason like Sui Hong. (Arbuckle, 1995, p. 591)

Even if this anecdotal story documented in the *hanshu*, compiled in the 1st century A.D., does not give a correct historical representation of intellectual discussions at the time, it mirrors the beginning of discussions about the cyclical essence of the *tianming* in China.

7. The Structure of the Confucian Political Imaginary

7.1. Characteristics of the mythological creational tradition

Liu Shu-hsien lists characteristics of the mythological creational tradition which originate in pre-Confucian times, shaped Confucian thought and later developments Confucian thought:

1. Orthodoxy-conscious tradition: ethnic and geographical origin of the ruler is not an issue as long as his rule over the “Middle Kingdom” (中国, *zhongguo*) is considered legitimate. (Liu, 1998, p. 6)
2. Culture-conscious tradition: “China has never been a nation in the modern sense of the term. China shows only a cultural unity that supersedes racial as well as geographical differences.” (Liu, 1998, p. 7)
3. Morally-conscious tradition: there are strong moral obligations between the ruler and the ruled. (Liu, 1998, p. 7)
4. Socially-conscious tradition: “the common people, left to their own devices, do not know how to create better living conditions. The rulers are supposed to fill this function” (Liu, 1998, p. 7)
5. This worldly-conscious tradition: “Since Heaven sees according to what people see, and hears according to what people hear, the will of Heaven is known as the will of the people is known. Emphasis is put on how to achieve harmony in nature as well as in the human world” (Liu, 1998, p. 8)

Liu points out that while the basis for the Confucian, Taoist and Moist schools of thought were just in the process of being created in the Warring States period, the

five characteristics of the mythological creational tradition have been generally accepted. The different schools chose mythological figures as embodiments of their philosophical ideals and thus later shaped what we know of these figures. The Taoists revered Huangdi, the Moists revered Yu, the Confucians revered Yao and Shun. Only the Legalists, like Han Feizi, who did not doubt their existence, doubted whether it is possible to have authentic knowledge about these creational myth figures. (Liu, 1998, p. 8) Yet the fact that legalist Shi Huangdi chose to base his very title on the three *huang* and five *di* reflects the general acceptance of the mythological creational tradition. (Fairbank & Teng, 1960, p. 87)

7.2. The Tasks of the Son of Heaven

According to Mancall, the Chinese emperor “was possessed of two distinct but related personalities”. One the one hand he was the man on the apex of organized civilisation, i.e. the *huangdi* (皇帝). One the other as the “Son of Heaven”, i.e. *tianzǐ* (天子), „the embodiment of virtue who by his very nature carried out the rites required for the continuing harmony of the universe, in both its natural and its social aspects“. (Mancall, 1968, p. 64)

Gao Mingtu attempts to provide a theoretical framework on the tasks of the *tianzǐ* from the Warring States period onwards. He identifies four key “tools” in the exercise of the mandate of heaven, which are of different degrees of importance to the mandate:

1. *de* (德): exercise of virtue
2. *lǐ* (礼): practise of the rites

3. *zheng* (政): exercise of political power
4. *xing* (刑): punishment, i.e. exercise of legal power

(Gao, 2008, p. 4)

On the more abstract level of government in general, which is also valid for the supreme government of the *tianzhi*, the *Book of Rites*, in chapter *Record on the Subject of Music* (乐记), provides a list of tasks necessary for the exercise of government:

礼，乐，刑，政，其极一也。所以同民心，而出治道也。

The purpose of [the exercise of] rites, [the cultivation of] music, [the exercise of] legal power and [the exercise of] political power is one: to bring together the minds of the people and bring forth government in accordance with the *dao*.

In chapter *Black Robes* (缁衣) it exemplifies the particular tasks in regards to the role they play in maintaining the mandate:

夫民教之以德，齐之以礼，则民有格心，教之以政，齐之以刑，则民有遁心。古君民者，子以爱之，则民亲之，信以结之，则民不倍。

If the people are taught with virtue, the rites will give them uniformity, the people's minds will be of good character, if they are taught through the exercise of political power, the exercise of legal power will give them uniformity and their minds will be directed at escaping [the punishments of the law]. Thus, when the ruler of the people loves them like his children, they will regard him as a parent, trust binds them and the people will turn away. (Gao, 2008, p. 4)

The understanding of the basis of sovereignty is thus very different to e.g. the understanding in slightly later Rome, where the exercise of virtue was only a mere assumed result of the *imperium* being handed over by the *populus romanus* to the ruler. The practise of *de*, virtue, is seen as the most vital task in the exercise of the mandate of heaven and thus constituent element of it or, from an orthodox point of view, the cosmic reflection of the tenure of the mandate.

Compared to the practise of virtue, the practise of *li*, rites, is but building on the precondition of the *tianzi*'s supreme virtue, because it puts the *tianzi* in a position of the ultimate nexus between heaven and earth. This, though, seems to be common phenomenon of universalistic orders, e.g. the pope in Christendom or the caliph during the early expansion of Islam.

This loss of virtue, a truly subjective verdict of historians, has served as reasoning for revolution throughout the Chinese history. Zhou notes that the etymologic origin of the modern Chinese word for revolution *geming* (革命) is “to change the mandate of heaven” (改革天命). (Zhou, 2006, p. 26)

As the Book of Rites points out the exercise of political and legal powers are mere secondary tools of governance. Ideally, the exercise of virtue and the practise of rituals should make “the people love [the ruler] like a parent”. Exercise of political and the exercise of legal powers are nonetheless tasks of the mandate of heaven.

Gao Mingshi identifies four principles of the mandate upheld by the exercise of the four “tools”:

1. Principle of unification
2. Principle of governance
3. Principle of kinsfolk preference

4. Principle of moralisation

The principle of unification states that the position of the *tianzi* in society is analogous to the Confucian position of the father in a family. The *shangshu* in its book on the Zhou, chapter *Regulation of the Floods* (洪范), states:

天子作民父母，以为天下王。

The son of heaven is the parent of the people and so becomes the sovereign of *tianxia*.

The principle of governance reflects the position of the *tianzi* as the enforcer of the “order of all under heaven”, the *tianxiafa* (天下法). If the order (i.e. the observation of the rites, the submission of tribute) is not upheld by any tributary states, then it is the *tianzi*'s task to restore that order militarily. Gao Mingshi notes that

“the use of force is not the what the West understands as imperialism, but rather the construction and maintenance of the order of all under heaven. The use of force serves but to achieve an end to the hostilities. Once the order is (re-) established, the use of force has achieved its aim and the enforcer actively retreats.” (Gao, 2008, p. 11)

He sees such military intervention as part of fourth task of the mandate, i.e. punishment. Ancient China thus lacks understanding of an “international” world order, all under heaven has to obey the *tianxiafa*, it is the *tianzi*'s task to enforce it militarily if his exemplary practice of virtue does not suffice to secure adherence to it. Mencius quotes the *Book of Odes*,

普天之下，莫非王土，率土之滨，莫非王臣。

All under heaven there is no land not ruled by the sovereign, no person on the borders to the sea not his servant. (Chen, 2007, p. 111)

The principle of kinsfolk preference for lack of a better word is not to be understood in ethnical terms, it is rather to be seen in a cultural distinction being drawn between those who uphold the *huaxia* culture and those who do not. Cultures are seen in a hierarchical order, where the *huaxia* culture is considered the supreme and most advanced. Cultural submission is thus seen as an expression of the cultural radiance/power of the *tianzi*. (Gao, 2008, p. 11)

The principle of moralisation is considered the quintessential aspect of the mandate: to spread the *tianxia* culture and thus the cultural submission continuously.

According to the *Analects*, Confucius supposedly said

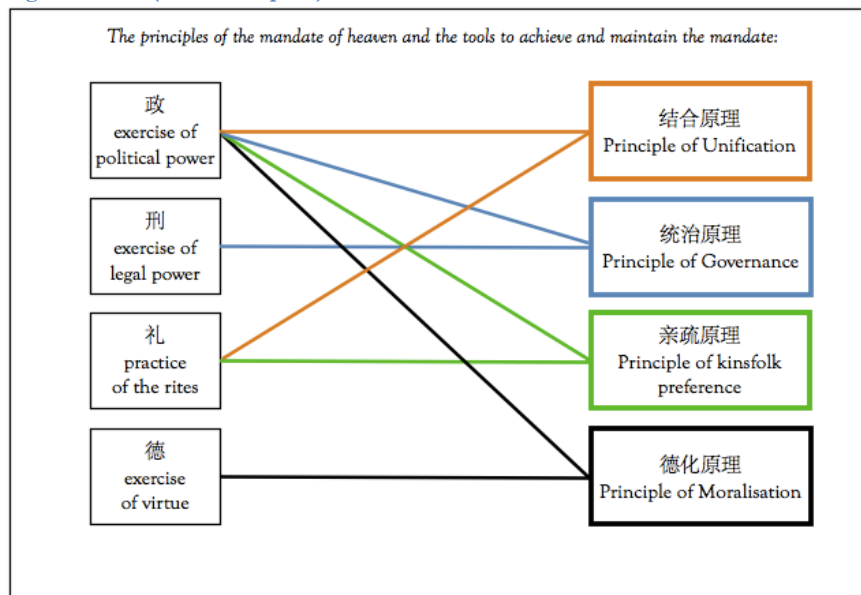
古远不人服，则修文德以来之。

If the remote peoples are not submissive, civil culture and virtue have to be cultivated to attract them.

Gao summarizes the complex tenets of the mandate of heaven in the following graph:

According to mainstream historiography this understanding of the Mandate of Heaven with its listing of tools at hand to enforce the four tenets of supreme power ceased to be valid with the abolition of the Qing dynasty in 1911/12 and was substituted by the Western concepts of statehood and international relations. Conventional historiography, while successively documenting the political upheavals within this new context cannot at least rule out the continuing validity of the understanding of supreme power based on the four tenets of the mandate of heaven

Figure 1 after (Gao, 2008, p. 17)



for the political actors in the so-called New China and thus provide a “native” explanation for the roles of unification, kinsfolk preference and moralisation have played in the political policy making processes.

Jiang Nannan and Fan Zhongxin in looking for native ideas for constitutional law very recently identified the following constitutional principles. These principles, according to the authors, “continue to have an extremely important meaning in our handling of present-day national and international political and economic matters.”

(Jiang, 2011, p. 53) For Jiang and Fan political legitimacy still oscillates within the following “purposes” of power:

1. Unity through the ruler’s virtue, unity of the centre and the periphery (王道一统，华夷一体)
2. Peaceful administration of China, autonomy of the periphery (治安中国，四夷自服)
3. Preparation to defend [the unity], combination of what is separate and contends (备而守之，隔攘结合)
4. The spreading of virtue in the world, benevolence to far away places (德华天下，恩信怀远)
5. The cultivation of teachings and the preservation of traditions, the proclamation of fair political order (修教存俗，齐政取宣)
6. Carry out fair judgements, determine the differences and put an end to disputes (载断决平，定分止争) (Jiang, 2011, pp. 50-52)

7.3. The Dynastic Cycle

The theory of the cyclical development of history goes beyond the mere succession of dynasties. Usher distinguished between a “moral” version and an “economic” version of the dynastic cycle, valid in unison (Usher, 1989, p. 1033). The moral version explains the substitution of one dynasty by another in the moral degeneration of the first. Despotic, immoral government not mired at maintaining harmony through the rights is seen as the cause for the decline and fall of a dynasty and the rise of a vigorous, morally devout new dynasty.

Mencius said in chapter *lianghuiwang xia*,

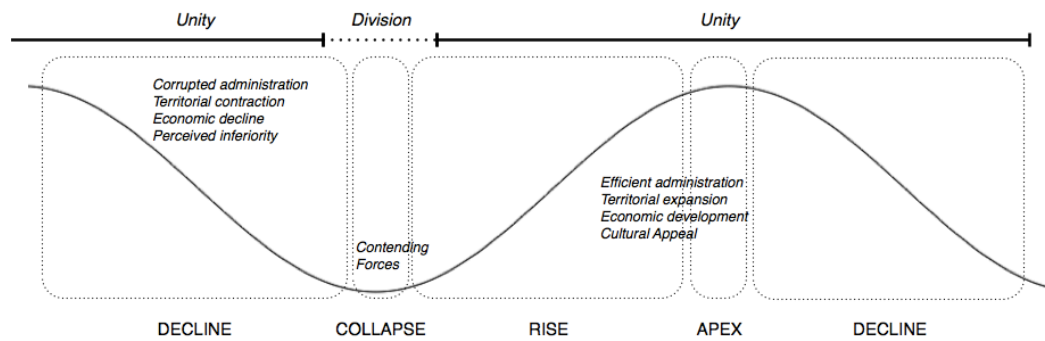
贼仁者谓之贼，贼义者谓之残，残贼之人谓之一夫。闻诛一夫纣矣，
未闻弑君也。

Men of corrupted benevolence (*ren*) are called thieves; men of corrupted justice (*yi*) are called barbarians. Thieves and barbarians are all called autocrats. I have heard people say that the autocrat Zhou was killed, I have not heard the sovereign (*jun*) Zhou was killed.

The economic version explains the substitution in economic terms. The cosmological order of *tianxia* with the Son of Heaven at its apex does not distinguish between social and natural phenomena as they are all part of the same world order. Droughts, earthquakes announce dynastic decline just as much as excessive taxation and any decline in agricultural productivity do.

Dong Zhongshu expounded a first systematic analysis of the dynastic cycle allowing for an analysis of the Mandate of Heaven in natural phenomena (*wuxing*). One of his disciples, Sui Hong, went so far as to announce the end of the Han dynasty to the Han emperor, and being executed for the heresy of doctrinal purity. (Arbuckle, 1995, p. 591) More relevant was that the “*wuxing* could impose a scheme of the eternal existence of change on the seemingly uncontrollable events of a volatile world.” (Loewe, 2002, p. 348)

Wang Hui also notes that the dynastic cycle served a (albeit short-sighted) legitimising purpose of new dynasties. “Historical continuity was a product of self-conscious construction”. (Wang, 2011a, p. 87)



Another theory also credited to Dong Zhongshu is seemingly completely contrary to the frustrating alteration of idealism, despotism, frustration, anarchy and idealism the dynastical cycle theory suggests. Dong Zhongshu, society will eventually work towards the Great Unity, the original age of perfection fondly upheld by Confucius.

The theory of “Three Worlds” (三世) will repeat again and again in Chinese history as a justificatory discourse for political power, from the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in the 19th century to the Hu-Wen administration of the People’s Republic of China. For Dong Zhongshu, the world develops from an “Age of Confusion” towards an “Age of Advancing Peace” characterised by moderate wealth (小康), to the final and primordial perfection of the “Age of Universal Peace” characterized by Great Unity (*datong*).

(1) Age of Confusion	(2) Age of Advancing Peace	(3) Age of Universal Peace
乱世 <i>luanshi</i>	升平世 <i>shengpingshi</i> 小康 <i>xiaokang</i> , i.e. society of moderate wealth	太平世 <i>taipingshi</i> 大同 <i>datong</i> , i.e. society of the Great Unity

(Kwong, 2000, p. 680)

Thus two conflicting discourses shaped Chinese understanding of historical development: the dynastic cycle theory explained the eventual “power corrupts” paradigm within Confucian orthodoxy, the three worlds theory again and again

provided an ideological basis for the assumption of power of “unorthodox” forces, such as the pseudo-Christian beliefs of the Taiping, the reformist thoughts of Kang Youwei (康有为), the Communist struggle towards socialism and, eventually communism. Its use in today’s pragmatist CCP discourse is but a return to old pattern.

7.4. The World, the Polity and the Family

The Family

The Confucian world is structured through the *sangang* (三纲) theory or “three bonds” theory: ruler and servant, father and son, husband and wife. The three bonds determine the social hierarchy both with the polity and the family. Political Confucianism based its judgement of the state of the world order on the deference to the three bonds or lack thereof. The interconnectedness of the private and the public thus necessitates a moral order and entails the strong emotional connection between world, polity and family. The *Book of Rites* states

故欲明德于天下者，先治其国，欲其国者，先齐其家，欲齐其家者，先正其心。身修而后家齐，家齐而后国治，国治而后天下平。

The Ancients who wished to illustrate virtue all under Heaven, first had to rightly govern their lands. Wishing to rightly govern will their lands, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first rectified their characters. ... after their characters were cultivated, their families were

regulated. Their families being regulates, their lands were rightly governed.

The lands being rightly governed, all under Heaven was at peace.

For Confucius, *ren* (仁 “benevolence”) was key to guarantee harmony within a hierarchically structured family. Mencius combines *ren* repeatedly with *yi* (义) „justice“ and extends its scope from the family to *tianxia*. (Zhang, 2005, p. 295)

The State

The term *guo* (国) originated as the “immediate domain of the Shang [ruler]” the bastion *jin* (殷) or the immediate domains of other rulers. It originally referred to settlements and the immediately adjacent lands. (Chen, 2004, p. 198)

Yu Fengchun notes that the present-day Chinese word for nation, *guojia* (国家), is richer than the Western word, because it incorporates *jia*, ie. clan/family and thus carries connotation of genealogical linkage. (Yu, 2010, p. 13) This linkage is very important in regards to the understanding of statehood and the hierarchical order (the three bonds theory) in it in political Confucianism.

The present-day Chinese word for China, *zhongguo* (中国) is translated by Kalgren as “Central Kingdom”, in Legge and Waley as “Middle Kingdom” and in Creel as “Central States”. (Chen, 2004, p. 198)

According to Yao Dali, *zhongguo* can be seen to carry three distinctive meanings in the Classics: (1) the lands of initial settlement of the *huaxia* culture (2) the territory under direct control of the central government/imperial court, (3) the Han (*huaxia*) ethnicity. (Yu, 2010, p. 10) The term *zhongguo* has thus seen its geographical reach

expand massively. In the Warring States period the original states of Qin, Chu, Wu, Yue, now in the heartlands of the People's Republic were not seen as part of *zhongguo*. States other than the Zhou referred to themselves as *zhongguo* during the Warring States period to distinguish themselves from states/tribes that refused to adopt Zhou rituals and institutions. From the Zhou to the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644 A.D.) *zhongguo* was a term mostly used in foreign affairs, whereas in domestic context the distinctive dynastic name, e.g. the Great Yuan, or terms like *benchao* (本朝, our dynasty) or *guochao* (国朝, state dynasty) were used. According to Zhao Gang's study on the origins of modern Chinese national identity, the dynastic name for the first time became interchangeable with the term *zhongguo*, i.e. "China". The publicly embracing of the term *zhongguo* served to win support of the Han elite and aimed at demonstrating the continuity of the Chinese body politic. (Zhao, 2006, pp. 5-7) Zhao notes that if *zhongguo* was understood in ethnic terms, the Qing as well as the previous non-Han dynasties Yuan, Jin, Liao., would have made their own rule illegitimate. If *zhongguo* was seen in cultural terms, then expansion of *zhongguo* could only imply that the incorporated populations submit themselves to the worldview of political Confucianism. The Qing court thus adopted on a new definition of *zhongguo* based on Qing administration and based on a multi-ethnic identity. This change in the understanding of *zhongguo* gave a theoretical framework for the conquest of Xinjiang, the border treaties with Russia and the definition of Mongols as "Chinese" (*zhongguo zhi ren*) in the latter treaties. (Zhao, 2006, p. 14) In the edict of abdication of the Xuantong emperor, the last Qing emperor, the multi-ethnic identity of *zhongguo* was reaffirmed:

“[we] welcome the establishment of a great Chinese republic that integrates all of the territories where dwell the five ethnic groups, that is Manchus, Han, Mongols, Muslims, and Tibetans” (Zhao, 2006, p. 16)

The Qing thus reaffirmed their Mandate of Heaven within the worldview of political Confucianism. The Mandate’s civilizing mission is upheld, its discourse in regards to territory changed, the suzerain territories of Tibet, Mongolia, Xinjiang were now seen as integral parts of the *zhongguo* and the civilizing mission also became internal to *zhongguo*.

The World

Tianxia (天下) appeared in the texts of the Warring States period and solidified its meaning in the end of the Western Han dynasty. The exact meaning at the time is still object of discussion, there two Japanese schools of thought on the meaning of *tianxia*.

A first school of thought, represented by Jingi Tasaki Masayoshi, Hiraoka Takeo, Nishijima Sadao and Hori Toshikazu, sees *tianxia* as a “world order” and equates aspirations expressed in dimensions of *tianxia* as “imperialism” in the Marxist sense of the word. (Yu, 2010, p. 11) A second school of thought represented by Yamada Sumeru and Abe Takeo equates aspirations expressed in dimensions of *tianxia* as aspirations to control “*guomin guojia*”, i.e. the population and the territory of the original *jinzhou*. (Yu, 2010, p. 11)

The two terms are neither synonymous nor do they contradict each other, i.e. the rule over a *guo*, or in particular *zhongguo* does not equal rule over *tianxia*, and the

existence of several *guo* outside of the domain of the *tianxi* is not an obstacle to the recognition of the latter's mandate.

The Ming dynasty philosopher Gu Yanwu (顾炎武) differentiated *guo* and *tianxia* in regards to their subjugation:

有亡国,有亡天下。亡国与亡天下奚辨? 曰,易姓改号,谓之亡国;仁义充塞,而至于率兽食人,人将相食,谓之亡天下。保国者,其君其臣,肉食者谋之。保天下者,匹夫之贱,与有责焉耳矣。 (Yu, 2010, p. 10)

There is a difference between the subjugation of a state and that of *tianxia*. Then how to tell the difference? When a dynasty is replaced by another, it is a change of family name and we say it is the subjugation of a state; and when the benevolence and righteousness are overridden so much so that even animals are directed to eat people and that even human beings become cannibals, we call it the subjugation of *tianxia*. Therefore, if one knew how to safeguard *tianxia*, he then knew how to safeguard a state. It is upon the duty of a monarch and those who enjoy wealth and power to safeguard a state, while as with the security of *tianxia*, even a person as humble as an unlearned commoner should shoulder the responsibility. (liberal but apt translation by (Liu & Huang, 2006, pp. 534-535))

Except from the disputed geographical difference, *tianxia* can be seen as in a moral dimension and *guo* in a geographical dimension. The *guo* is seen here as a geographically limited polity, where the monopoly on violence over a certain area and a certain population in the classical sense is maintained. *Tianxia*, however, is the entirety of worldly expressions of the *dao*, the Ultimate Principle. The cosmic order

carries moral implications and while *guo* can be ruled by simple men, *tianxia* can only be ruled through the *tianming* given to sages whose personality is “the embodiment of brilliant moral will” (Liu & Huang, 2006, p. 527) and ensure a harmonious society in respect of the three bonds theory.

The presentation of tribute to the *tianzi* equalled a ritual demonstration of acknowledging the Chinese world order. Of course, this was the interpretation on the Chinese side of the tribute, whereas the other side might interpret the very tribute as a strangely concocted taxation for trading rights or technological exchange. For the Chinese, the presentation of tribute, according to Mancall’s study on the Qing dynasty tribute system, was not the acknowledgment of China’s superior civilisation, but rather of civilisation itself, the Son of Heaven being at its apex. (Mancall, 1968, p. 64) This explains how the tributary relationships of China could only be bilateral and not multilateral. The tributary system of the Qing dynasty reflected a cultural distinction between Confucian and non-Confucian tributary states in the imperial government’s organisational structure. Tributary relations with other Confucian states, such as Vietnam or Korea, were handled through the Board of Rites, whereas tributary relations with non-Confucian states were handled by the “Barbarian Control Office” (理番院). (Mancall, 1968, pp. 72-73)

The existence of states not acknowledging the *tianzi*’s supremacy has been recognized ever since political Confucianism developed its moral world order in the early Han dynasty. The Han dynasty *heqin* (和亲) policy with the *xiongnu* tribes of present-day Mongolia, the Tang dynasty’s *heqin* policy with the *tubo* empire of present-day Tibet, the border treaty between the Jin and the Southern Song in 1141 A.D. and Zhu Yuanzhang’s (朱元璋) admission that there were fifteen *bu chen zhi guo*

(不臣之国), i.e. political entities not subject to Chinese suzerainty, are exemplary episodes of the recognition of the non-universality of the Chinese world order. (Yu, 2010, p. 19) Universal application of the *tianming* is thus rather to be seen as an ultimate goal, whose most able asserter is the *tianzi*.

7.5. The “Self” and the “Other”

Professor Xu Jilin from East China Normal University asked in a recent essay

中国面临着共同体认同的危机。建立一个象西方国家那样的现代民族国家，这是大部分中国知识分子的共识 [...] 真正的问题在于：这一民族国家究竟是一个政治共同体，还是历史文化共同体？[...] 作为现代中国人，如何构成一个“我们”？是政治的“我们”，还是文化的“我们”？ (Xu, 2006, p. 1)

China is facing a crisis of community legitimacy. The [development towards the] establishment of a modern nation-state similar to those in the West is the consensus among the majority of Chinese intellectuals. [...] The real question is: is this nation-state a political community or rather a historical, cultural community? [...] As modern Chinese, how do we construct a “we”? Is it a political “we”, or is it a cultural “we”?

Professor Xu does not answer his question in his paper. To understand the native understanding who is “Chinese” not in terms of administrative reach of the Chinese State, but, much more importantly, in terms of an emotionally felt cultural sense of community, that albeit being mono-directional in the eyes of Uighur and Tibetan

separatists, one needs to look at the sense of community in the traditional Chinese worldview.

The *yantielun* (盐铁论), Discourses on Salt and Iron, a debate on state policy in the late Western Han period (81 B.C.), include a speech, which brings out the idea of the concentric zones:

“while the Son of Heaven stands at the centre, the intensity of imperial authority decreases, and the demands on the population are reduced as the far-lying areas succeed one another” (Loewe, 1994, p. 21)

To explain the radiating force to the Mandate of Heaven, Chinese scholars consistently refer to the theory of *wufu* as documented in the *yugong*:

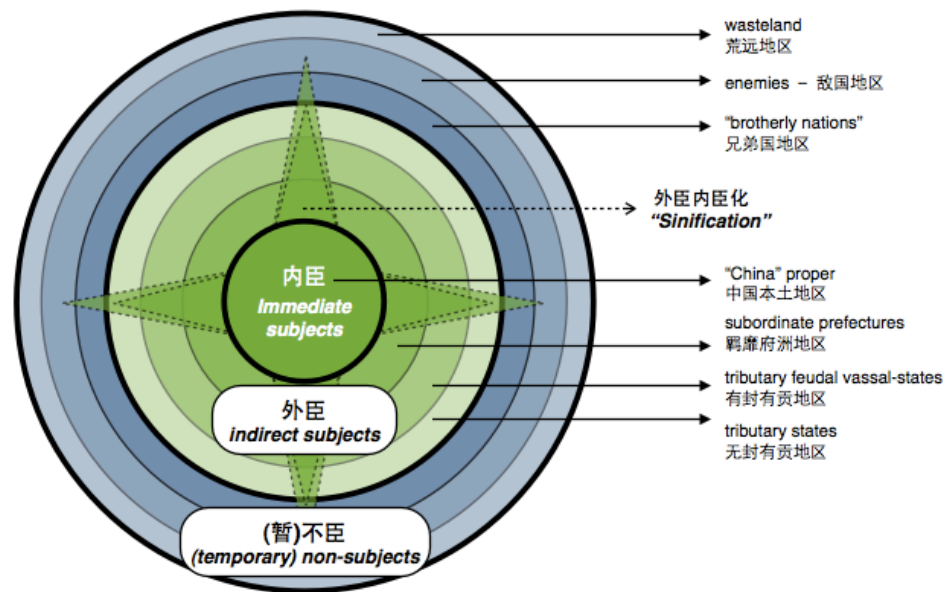


Figure 2 after (Gao, 2008, p. 23)

The farther away a suzerain state is, the less the tributary duties to the *tianzi* were. It remained the orthodox vision for “international” relations until the Qing dynasty confrontation with the Westphalian system. The *tianxia* geography in its unipolarity is

incompatible with the unwillingness to adopt political Confucianism by Western powers and the rethinking of the “Chinese nation” in the early 20th century. It will be argued that the *tianxia* system survived in terms of the understanding of the “purpose” rather than the territory (or territorial aspirations) of the Chinese body politic within the Westphalian system.

The uniqueness in traditional Chinese understanding of “the other” in *tianxia* is that the “foreigner”, “barbarian” or “non-subjects” has been predominantly understood in cultural terms, not primarily in terms of ethnic grounds. The passage from the distinction between *xia* and *yi* changes from an ethnically and socially oriented distinction to a geographical and cultural distinction in the passage from Western to Eastern Zhou dynasty. *Xia*, according to Chen Zhi’s study on the concept, “was a concept created by the early Zhou élites to seek ethnic integrity, historical legitimacy and cultural dignity in their confrontation. (Chen, 2004, p. 202)

The distinction between the “self” and the “other” has never been seen as an insuperable racial barrier. Indeed, as shown in the previous chapters, political Confucianism sees the civilizing task, i.e. spreading of *li* and *de*, of the *tianzi* as pontificating his world order and thus making the “other” gradually become part of the “self”. Chinese sources regularly quote Mencius (chapter *tengwen gong shang*) in this regard:

吾闻用夏变夷者，未闻变于夷者也。

I have heard that men have changed barbarians by means of our great culture,
but I have never heard of any who have been changed by barbarians.

Late Qing scholars such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao tried to justify *zhonghua* unity through common ancestry and a common cultural mission. The memoirs of their contemporary Dong Fangsan express the same line of thought:

“the Manchus, Mongols and Han are different branches of a single tree. Originally, they came from the same ancestor and they will develop into a unity.” (Zhao, 2006, p. 22)

This view continued to be the orthodox understanding of Chineseness of the later nationalists such as, most prominently, president Sun Yatsen (孙中山) and generalissimo Jiang Kaishek (蒋介石) in his “China’s Destiny” (中国之命运), published in 1943. For Sun the so-called five races of the republic (Han, Manchus, Mongols, Hui, Tibetans) formed a single national entity, which he termed the “Chinese race” (*zhonghua minzu*).

In his Proclamation of the Provisional President dated January 1st, 1912 he said:

合汉满蒙回藏诸地为一国，即合汉满蒙回藏诸族为一，是曰民族之统一。 (Di, 2010, p. 6)

To unite the lands of the Han, the Manchus, the Mongols, the Hui, the Tibetans into one State, means to unite the races of the Han, the Manchus, the Mongols, the Hui, the Tibetans into one people, this is what is called the unification of [our] race.

The issue of contention was what binds these five races of the republic together.

Communist and Nationalist anthropologists contended to identify that link *zhonghua minzu* and define themselves as the worthy inheritor of the mythological heritage dating back to Yao and Shun.

Mao Zedong (毛泽东) requested historiographers around Fan Wenlan (范文澜) to write a history of the *zhonghua minzu* in 1940 in order to counter Japanese propaganda campaigns for arguing for a Greater Asia under Japanese leadership. Fan in one year's time compiled the textbook *A Concise General History of China* (中国通史简编) and created a shared past in which the individual histories of the ethnic minorities folded into the linear evolution of the Han ethnicity. (Leibold, 2007, p. 157)

Fan published an article entitled *The Development of the zhonghua minzu* (中华民族的发展) in the October 1950 edition of the CCP Party journal *Xuexi* (学习). In this article he propagated the theory that all ethnicities of the People's Republic originated from a group of unique, indigenous proto-Chinese in the Stone Age. The "Peking Man", *homo erectus* bone remains, discovered in Zhoukoudian near Beijing in 1923, and much younger *homo sapiens* bone remains nearby in 1933 served as the "scientific" basis for this reasoning. Fan explained the dominance of the Han ethnicity in two ways. Firstly, in economic terms the Han expanded because of the advantageous development of the production forces in the fertile Yellow River valley. Secondly, in cultural terms, the Han expanded through the continuous gradual assimilation of minority nationals at its fringes through a continuous gradual expansion of cultural influence. According to Leibold "the Han nationality thereby transformed itself into a microcosm of the *zhonghua minzu*'s collective diversity". (Leibold, 2007, p. 173)

PRC sociologists, most prominently Fei Xiaotong (费孝通), supported a vision of the *zhonghua minzu* originating from different sources but now being one cultural unity (中国民族多元一体).

In the preamble of the 1982 constitution, the PRC defines itself as a “unitary multinational-national state built up jointly by the people of all its nationalities” (全国各族人民共同缔造的统一的各民族国家). A quick look at census data shows the importance of this issue. According to the census of the year 2000 (the data for the 2010 census in to this day not yet publicly available), 8,41 % of China’s population (106 million people) belong to 55 state-recognized “minority nationalities” (少数民族). While these 106 million people are only a small fraction of the entire population, they take up five-eighths of Chinese territory. (Mackerras, 2004, pp. 216-217) Finding a definition of the “self” in China that includes those “minority nationalities” is of vital importance in maintaining the territorial integrity of China.

The Korean scholar Ryu Yong-Tae argues that every discourse on defying the Chinese nation is rests on the premise that the majority (Han) gradually absorbs other, minority, nationalities. He qualifies this as the “internalized imperial nature” of Chinese nationalism. (quoted in (Wang, 2011a, p. 178)). Tsinghua university professor Wang Hui adds three valid observations to this qualification.

Firstly, the emphasis on the principle of “one China” is “a response to the crisis of disintegration brought about by imperialist aggression” therefore making “national amalgamation and sovereign independence common objects of the entire 20th century national liberation movement” (Wang, 2011a, p. 179).

Secondly, the assimilation process is a process of extending the traditional system of centralized bureaucracy of the heartlands to the periphery (from tribute relations to administration).

Thirdly, the propositions of viewing the population as an organic whole are not compatible with the discriminatory ethnic policies of the PRC. (Wang, 2011a, p. 179)

The PRC does indeed uphold its multi-ethnic character in as the photo-ops of the Party leadership at every larger ceremonial event. The PRC also enforces positive discrimination for minorities in terms of access to higher education, birth control and access to social welfare.

The “unity in diversity” understanding of the Chinese nation as put forward since reform and opening up accentuates, according to Wang Hui, the “unification of diversity and hybridity” as the essence of Chineseness. (Wang, 2011a, p. 187)

8. Decay and Response of the Confucian Political

Imaginary

8.1. Two Explanatory Models for Decay

Fairbank's Framework

The great Sinologist John K. Fairbank provided a first framework to understand the “Chinese world order” in his homonymous conference volume published in 1968. For Fairbank and his students, representing the so-called Harvard School of Chinese studies, the framework is no longer valid, the confrontation with the West has changed China from its core. They analyse

structure and functioning of an international order composed of China and states or peoples in contact with China. This international order flourished until the Western powers intruded into East Asia in the mid-nineteenth century; thereafter it survived vestigially down to 1911. (Fairbank, 1968, p. 5)

He expounds a set of fifteen assumptions, which have been most influential on how pre-modern China is seen abroad and in China today. The assumptions below, Fairbank emphasises, are only valid on a normative level as an ideal pattern and only from a Chinese point of view. (Fairbank, 1968, p. 12)

1. “The Chinese world originated as an agrarian-based culture island”, expanding through gradual absorption of territories, remaining the centre of its own world.
2. The Chinese world maintained a sense of unity.

3. The Chinese world was hierarchic and anti-egalitarian.
4. At the apex of the Chinese world was the Son of Heaven (天子).
5. The Chinese world order was „sustained by a heavy stress on ideological orthodoxy“.
6. Education in the Classics sustained this ideological orthodoxy.
7. Leadership was manifested in the application of rites (礼) and, alternatively, of regulations (法), to prevent deviations from harmony. The leadership role of the Son of Heaven was personal, not abstract (in the name of the state).
8. Two administrative structures existed side-by-side: the more ancient structure based on personal relations between emperor and subject (subject clans, subject states) and the less ancient bureaucracy.
9. The bureaucratic structure began with the unification of the Qin Empire in 221 B.C.
10. The reach of the Son of Heaven was vast but extremely superficial. The ideological commitment of the local élites guaranteed their own legitimacy and thus also secured adherence to the world order.
11. This ideological commitment was expected from rulers (representatives) of states outside China.
12. The expansion of the Chinese world order worked through the integration of exterior vassals of an earlier period to become interior vassals of a later period.
13. Non-Chinese rulers could become Sons of Heaven.
14. The Chinese world order also replicated itself linguistically.

15. Non-Chinese rulers, i.e. “outer vassals” participated in the Chinese world order by observing the rites. The tribute system linked them with to the Son of Heaven. (Fairbank, 1968, pp. 5-10)

In the understanding of Fairbank all these fundamental characteristics of the Chinese worldview from the Warring States period to the Qing dynasty lost their political validity with the imperialist aggression of the West. They developed an “impact-response” explanation, which has also been adopted by Chinese native historiography.

The Impact-Response Explanation for Decay

Chinese orthodox historiography tend to frame the second half of the 19th century and the first of the 20th as the “century of humiliation” (百男耻辱), the period from the Opium Wars to the proclamation of the People’s Republic, in which unprecedented changes caused by imperialist intrusion “humiliated” the great culture-nation of China. A standard undergraduate textbook for contemporary Chinese history from People’s University Beijing begins with this very story:

二十世纪是中华民族崛起的世纪。几代中国人前仆后继、顽强奋斗，没有被西方列强的侵略、封锁和高压政策所吓倒，中华民族奇迹般地从极度衰弱、备受屈辱的困境中重新站立起来，大踏步地走向繁荣富强，终于把“振兴中华”的共同理想变为现实。(Jin, 2001, p. 2)

The 20th century is the century of the rise of the Chinese nation. Several generations of Chinese advanced fearlessly, through tenacious struggle, not intimidated by Western imperialist aggression, blockage and hardliner

pressure, made the Chinese nation from an extremely weak predicament of humiliation miraculously stood up again, with great strides towards prosperity finally turning the vision of „reviving China“ into reality.

Early Western historians adopted the same approach to explaining the century before Communist takeover in China. John K. Fairbank and his Harvard school and Joseph R. Levenson also from Harvard proposed an “impact-response” model, according to which the reason for the decay of Qing dynasty China lied in the failure of the old *tianxia* system to adapt to the first intruder not willing to adopt the Chinese worldview, the Western barbarians.

Levenson published three major works on the intellectual debate in China during that century between 1958 and 1965 (*The Problem of Intellectual Continuity*, *The Problem of Monarchical Decay*, *The Problem of Historical Significance*), which were based on discussions in two conferences 1952, 1954. He tried to explain to an American audience in the early years of Communist government in China how the Chinese civilisation had disintegrated and the new China persistently condemning its own intellectual heritage was to be understood.

For Levenson, “the breakdown of traditional Chinese society is the result of the western impact, the same western incursion that ruffled and finally ruined Chinese confidence in China’s intellectual self-sufficiency.” (Levenson, 1958/1972, p. 145)

For Fairbank, the Qing government’s response to the West was the reason for a complete collapse of the traditional Chinese worldview. The Qing did not westernize their traditions, but rather tried to explain the “treaty system” after the Opium Wars in terms of its tributary system of international relations, upholding a myth of ritual, thus moral centrality. (Fairbank, 1968, p. 259) Within this framework, for instance,

foreign diplomats posted to China only represented the traditional principle that foreign merchants in China be superintended by one of their countrymen and the most-favoured nation status granted in various treaties only reflected imperial benign impartiality. Foreign emissaries were allowed under duress to take residence in the capital after the Second Opium War. Only by 1873, they were granted an audience with the Tongzhi emperor. According to the Qing record, the envoys “looked up at the emperor in audience”. A Beijing newspaper account recalls that the envoys were so overwhelmed by the emperor’s presence that they dropped their letters of credence “overcome with trembling”. (Fairbank, 1968, p. 262) For Fairbank, the widening gap “between the synarchic power structure and a sinocentric culture” undermined the assumption “that traditional China could be ruled only as a combined state-and-culture”. (Fairbank, 1968, p. 273)

On an ideational level, Benjamin Schwartz agrees: “both the internal and external bases of [the *tianxia* world order] have decidedly crumbled. Although it is quite conceivable that many elements of Confucianism as a total philosophy may live on into the twentieth century, the specific cosmology on the basis of which the Chinese universal kinship occupied a unique ontological status has [...] irrevocably collapsed.” (Schwartz, 1968, p. 285)

Fairbank in his later works, while continuing to see a complete rupture with the past in the Qing inability to adapt to foreign aggression on an ideational level, used the traditional Chinese worldview to explain contemporary Chinese policy. In explaining the centrality of the One China policy in the PRC foreign policy discourse, he refers to the *tianxia* world order. “It cannot be expunged from the Chinese language or from the minds of the Chinese people. This is not only an idea, but a sentiment, a

feeling habituated by millennia of conduct. It attaches the highest importance to Chinese civilization, which consists of all those people who live in a Chinese way [...] and springs from a sense of culturalism, something a good deal stronger than a mere Western-style nationalism.” (Fairbank, 1948/1983, p. 425)

The changes in the Chinese understanding of “China” during 20th century have to be understood, according to Fairbank and Schwartz, in terms of complete substitution of the traditional worldview by a Westphalian worldview, because the collapse of the Qing dynasty was caused by the ideational inadequacy of the traditional worldview to deal with the other, “modern” worldview. In Albert Feuerwerker’s words “in its place arose [...] modern Chinese nationalism whose memory of the trauma of the cataclysmic impact of foreign imperialism on traditional China is the principal, but not exclusive force which operates now to shape the actions of the P.R.C. in the world arena. (Feuerwerker, 1972, p. 5) Nathan and Ross observe, “in contrast to the self-evident American nationalism of manifest destiny, Chinese nationalism is powered by feelings of national humiliation and pride (Nathan, Ross (1997), quoted in (Guang, 2005, p. 494))

Cohen’s Critique and Its Consequences to Contemporary China

Paul Cohen, a student of Fairbank and Schwartz at Harvard, questioned this approach arguing that the internal changes of Chinese society itself and the internal different reactions to Western invasion led to the monumental changes at beginning of the 20th century.

In the eyes of Cohen Fairbank commits three errors of judgement. Firstly, he pays a disproportionate amount of attention to Western-related aspects of 19th century

Chinese history. Secondly, because of the limiting prism of the impact-response provides only a narrow, insufficiently complex narrative to 19th century Chinese history and its 20th century consequences. Thirdly, Fairbank's argument for failure to adapt frames all non-Western related aspects of 19th century Chinese political developments "in terms of their 'remarkable inertia'" and uniformity. (Cohen, 1984/2010, pp. 11-15) For Cohen, impact-response theory is not "wrong"; its intellectual reach is rather delimited.

Previous explanations of the Taiping rebellion (1850-1864) focussed on the ideological imports from Christianity, its founder and paramount leader Hong Xiuquan (洪秀全) portraying himself as the younger brother to Jesus Christ. For Cohen, it was but „a Western-influenced variation on a theme that was played in widely scattered parts of China [...] in response to conditions that by and large predated the impact of the West.“ (Cohen, 1984/2010, p. 20) Cohen explains the slowness of the Qing response to Western aggression not in its ideological blindness, but in its deliberate choice to deal with much more urgent internal matters, such as the Taiping rebellion, first. (Cohen, 1984/2010, p. 22)

Coherently on an ideological level, Cohen denies that the reason for failure of the restoration and reform efforts parallel to the Meiji restoration in Japan was due to the fundamental incompatibility of the Chinese worldview and (economic, administrative, etc.) modernization. In his eyes, the Qing government and even the reformers refused or failed "to see the relevance of modernization to what in their eyes were essentially old and familiar problems". (Cohen, 1984/2010, p. 25)

Cohen argues for an end to the classical rupture between modern and traditional Chinese history with the end of Qing dynasty. On the one hand, this breaks with the

tradition of stressing the changelessness of Chinese political culture before the rupture. On the other, this allows for a more native, non-Western perspective on the consequences of the inclusion of Western thought into Chinese political discourse after the Qing dynasty and a rebuttal to the assumption that the only kind of “development” in China is “leading toward modernity, as defined by the Western historical experience”. (Cohen, 1984/2010, p. 70) Chinese scholars only recently have embraced Cohen’s critique of the impact-response model in regards to its influence on the present-day understanding of the Chinese nation (its “humiliating” creation myth) and Chinese nationalism. Guang Lei sees two shortcomings. Firstly, the limited narrative of the China-West encounter excludes China’s non-Western relationships. Secondly, focussing on the struggle against overcoming weakness and humiliation neglects other sources of claims around which the state is able to mobilise sentiment. (Guang, 2005, pp. 495-496)

8.2. Kang Youwei’s Great Unity

Kang Youwei (康有为) is mainly remembered as the major exponent of a failed last attempt to save the Qing dynasty, the so-called *wuxu bianfa* (戊戌变法), or “Hundred Day’s Reform”, under the auspices of the Guangxu emperor from June 11th to September 21st 1898. While Kang’s actual influence on the events has been questioned (Wong, 1992), Chinese and Western historiography see in him and his student Liang Qichao (梁启超) the two protagonists in rethinking the basic foundations of political Confucianism to provide renewed ideological legitimacy to

the imperial system of the Qing as it struggled to survive foreign aggression and internal fatigue.

Kang Youwei was born in 1858 in Nanhai, Guangdong province. He was compelled to study the Confucian Classics from early age. In his early twenties he read Chinese travel reports to foreign countries and visited the British colony Hong Kong in 1879. In 1882 he travelled to Beijing for the first time to participate the imperial examinations and failed. The following year he first engaged in reform politics by participating in the founding a society against the women foot binding (不缠会) and started reading translations of foreign books, especially on evolutionary theory. (Thompson, 1984, pp. 26-28) In the following years he wrote a first draft of his major work *Book on the Great Unity* (*datongshu*, 大同书) He oriented himself to the chapter *liyun* (礼运) in the *Book of Rites*:

大道之行也，天下为公，选贤与能，讲信修睦。

When the great *dao* [i.e.: the ultimate principle, the grand course] was pursued, a communal spirit ruled *tianxia*, men of talents and ability were chosen, the words were sincere, harmony was cultivated [/ was spread]. (Fan, 2006, p. 14)

Unlike his contemporaries he does not see the *dao* of Heaven as “a dynamic variation on the practise of the perfect, golden age from the distant past, but rather it was a dynamic that drove history towards a perfect world in the future.” (Goto-Jones, 2005, p. 805)

In the course of working on the *datongshu* for the rest of his life, he worked on reinterpreting political Confucianism in a way that it fitted with his utopian ideal and societal changes of his lifetime.

In 1888 he unsuccessfully submitted his first reform proposals to the Qing court, a year later he passed the second-degree imperial exams. The following years he dedicated himself to teaching the Classics, Buddhism in at the *wanmuqiaotang* (万木草堂) in Guangzhou. Liang Qichao, who he had met while taking the imperial exam, joined him there.

In his first major work *xinxue weijing kao* (新学伪经考), Study of the Forged Classics of the Xin Period, published in 1891, he famously stated that the Classics as they have been transmitted since the Xin dynasty *fei kongzi zhi jing* (非孔子之经), i.e. are not the Classics of Confucius, but rather forged documents to serve the ideological needs of the short-lived Xin dynasty. His study on Confucius was less a historiographical contribution than a political statement to the contemporary Qing court. The fact that he had started sending petitions to the court before having read the study on the “forged” Classics by Liao Ping (廖平) he plagiarized into his own study, shows that Kang used the historical argument to provide “theoretical foundation” to his reform agenda. (Kwong, 2000, p. 687) In *xinxue weijing kao* Kang tried to demonstrate that the so-called “old-text version” of the Classics had been forged toward the end of the Western Han dynasty and tried to prove the authenticity of the older so-called “new-text version” of the Classics, which was the basis of Dong Zhongshu’s thought and the *gongyang* school. According to Kang, the old-text versions served to distort Confucius “great principles” hidden in the esoteric language of the new-text school. One of these great principles of Confucius was the “unfolding of the three epochs”: Kang refutes the standing theory of the cyclical development of history and lays down an evolution of (political) world history in

three stages to the ultimate goal of Great Unity following the *sanshi* (三世, “Three Ages”) understanding of the Han dynasty *gongyang* school of Dong Zhongshu.

(1) Age of Confusion	(2) Age of Advancing Peace	(3) Age of Universal Peace
乱世 <i>luanshi</i>	升平世 <i>shengpingshi</i> 小康 <i>xiaokang</i> , i.e. society of moderate wealth	太平世 <i>taipingshi</i> 大同 <i>datong</i> , i.e. society of great unity
Federation of former states	Construction of a new Public Space	Extinction of the State in a world society
Inequality of personal rights within several countries	Gradual equalization of rights within countries, but inequality between the races	Equality of all people, distinction between the states and the races being extinguished
The people owning private property, and the Government paying the price for its expropriation from the people	The people’s private property not to be expropriated without great reason	Private property extinguished
Every country protecting its own trade	The International Government protecting the trade of the several countries	The distinction of States being extinguished, there is no protection needed.

shortened after Tsuchida (Hummel, 1935, p. 349), (Kwong, 2000, p. 680)

Kang’s theory on the historical development is striking in at least two aspects.

Firstly, the overall similarity between his understanding of a linear evolution towards the *datong* and the Marxist understanding of the historical evolution towards true Communism is striking and, as will be shown in later chapters, is fundamental to the positive reception of communist thought in China.

Secondly, it is striking that his thoughts on the reform of Qing dynasty China focus on the evolution of the international system, rather than industrialization, administrative reform etc. of China proper.

In work *kongzi gaizhi kao* (孔子改制考, Study on Confucius as an Institutional Reformer), written around 1886 and published in 1897, Kang portrays Confucius not as the mere collector and transmitter of ancient principles, but rather as the very

author of the Classics. Kang argued that Confucius attempted to bring about institutional changes in his time “by appealing to antiquity”. (Chi, 1986, p. 19)

His contribution was not revolutionary (*geming*, i.e. change the Mandate), he termed it *bianfa* (变法, i.e. change the ways). The term can be traced back to the reforms of Shang Yang (商鞅), which transformed the Qin state before it unified China in 221 B.C., and the reforms of Wang Anshi (王安石), the Northern Song dynasty reformer and resonate moments of great successful political changes in Chinese history.

Representatives of the *zìqiáng yùndòng* (自强运动), Self-Strengthening Movement, the statesmen Li Hongzhang (李鸿章) and Zuo Zongtang (左宗棠), tried to change China proper according to Zhang Zhidong’s *zhōngxué wéi tǐ, xīxué wéi yòng* principle (中学为体，西学为用), i.e. „Chinese learning for fundamental principles and the Western learning for practical application”, they did not question the fundamental political conditions of China. Kang Youwei provided an ideological middle way between sticking to the native political ideology, upon which Qing legitimacy rested but which at the same time contradicted the Qing Mandate, or refuting political Confucianism and thus accepting a then perceived bitter Darwinian inferiority to Western worldviews. According to Kang the Classics, the tenets of Chinese statehood, have been interpreted faultily. Kang’s call for the study of the *gongyang* tradition two millennia earlier is very relevant to his talk about the struggle for the Great Unity in the beginning of the 20th century in the middle of what Chinese historians now call the *bainian guochi* (百年国耻), “century of humiliation”. China, in Kang’s eyes, could only escape from its unfortunate position by reassuming its central position as a moral power, which it lost because of wrong interpretation of its

proper ideological foundation. Only as the prime advocate of the Great Unity within the rectified interpretation of the Classics and the inclusion of some Western fortes, China could re-exert its cultural appeal and thus reassert its territorial integrity.

The military weakness of Qing government was exposed in the defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the subsequent Treaty of Shimonoseki, also known as the Treaty of Maguan (马关条约). China had to pay a substantial indemnity to Japan, to cede Taiwan as well as its suzerainty claim over Korea to Japan and *de facto* lost the Liaodong peninsula to Russia. Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao were among the organisers of the *gongche shangshu* (公车上书) movement, in which thousands of the imperial exam candidates signed a petition to the Court opposing the Treaty of Shimonoseki and advocated administrative and military reforms. The court's refusal to discuss reform led to protests and radicalized many of the good-willed young candidates. The petition, while refused at court, was published lithographically in Shanghai. Several thousand copies were distributed in six months marking a starting point for public debate on political reform in China (Kwong, 2000, p. 681). Kang understood the growing importance of public debate and founded the newspaper *zhongwaijiwen* (中外记闻), roughly translated as „News Records from China and Abroad“, in Beijing, the journal *qiangxuebao* (强学报) or “Journal of Self-strengthening Studies” in Shanghai and later the journal *zhixinbao* (知新报) or “New Knowledge Journal” in Macao. (Kwong, 2000, pp. 681-682)

In April 1898, after the German annexation of the Jiaozhou peninsula in Shandong, Kang and Liang set up the *guobaohui* (国保会), Society for the Protection of the Nation, with the three goals of *baoguo*, *baozhong*, *baojiao* (保国, 保种, 保教), i.e. the

protection of the *guo* (here meant as territorial sovereignty in the Qing empire), the protection of the ethnical autonomies and the protection of the teachings. (Kwong, 2000, p. 685)

On June 11, 1898 the Guangxu emperor started issuing a series of edicts in which he outlined administrative reforms as had been urged ever more pressingly by the intelligentsia inside and outside the Qing state and thus set of a very short-lived reform period known as 'The Hundred Days' Reform. Kang Youwei later successfully portrayed himself as one of the protagonists of the reform effort and is remembered as such in mainstream historiography, but his actual influence on the events was marginal. (Kwong, 2000, p. 677)

Guangxu announced a wide-ranging set of educational, military, economic and administrative reform measures too vast to succeed at once. The emperor also allowed low-ranking officials and commoners to directly petition the throne on reform proposals for the first time in Chinese history. While the Empress Dowager Cixi had been detached to any involvement for or against the reforms of her nephew the emperor at first, a secret petition to her by the censor Yang Chongyi (杨崇伊) in September 1898 lamenting chaos after the dismissal of thousands of bureaucrats and the apparent negative influence of Kang Youwei, Sun Yatsen and others on the emperor led to her "palace coup" re-assuming tutelage over the emperor and ending the reforms. (Kwong, 2000, pp. 670-675)

Kang fled to Canada in 1898, where founded the *baohuanghui* (保皇会), the Society for the Protection of the Emperor, in 1899 and then for more than a decade roamed foreign countries to form public opinion on the necessity of a reformed Qing China and gathering financial support. In 1902 he finalised the *datongshu* in Darjeeling, India.

One recurring theme of his speeches and writings abroad was the importance of the unity of China. (Thompson, 1984, pp. 40-41) In a 1902 article, Kang described the lands brought under Qing administration in the previous two centuries as the “greater China” (大中国), this expansion laid the groundwork for a „new China“ (新中国). A strong national identity should be created in this new China:

[The Qing government] should establish as permanent national name the Chinese state (中华国, *zhonghua guo*). Because the Manchus, Han-Chinese, Mongols, Muslims and Tibetans all belong to a single state, they are all Chinese (中国人, *zhongguo ren*) without any distinction. (Zhao, 2006, p. 21)

Thus the early 20th century Chinese “nationalism” Kang Youwei represented was one of conservative reformism aiming at gradual reforms but keeping political Confucianism, its moralism, social hierarchy and ultimate goal of returning to the Great Unity, at the centre of Chinese collective political identity.

The memoirs of his contemporary Dong Fangsan express the same line of thought:

“the Manchus, Mongols and Han are different branches of a single tree. Originally, they came from the same ancestor and they will develop into a unity.” (Zhao, 2006, p. 22)

Kang opposed the proclamation of the Republic of China and the abdication of the Xuantong emperor in 1911/12. As general Yuan Shikai (袁世凯), conservative protagonist of the repression of the Hundred Day’s Reform with his own imperial aspirations, assumed the presidency, Kang sided with the revolutionaries around Sun Yatsen (孙中山). Kang supported the short-lived (twelve days) restoration of the

Xuantong emperor under general Zhang Xun (张勋) in 1917. (Thompson, 1984, pp. 38-39) In 1919, Kang sent Woodrow Wilson a copy of his *datongshu* with suggestions concerning the League of Nations. (Hummel, 1935, p. 350) Kang's rejection of Wilson's suggestion of the publication of an English translation of the work is emblematic for Kang's insistence on the supreme mission of the Chinese culture and that the tasks and the target group of the *datongshu* is essentially Chinese. (Thompson, 1984, p. 41) The concern for international affairs in Kang Youwei was not necessarily directed at the solution of international issues, but rather a reassertion to all member agents (ethnicities) of China of the supreme political imaginary of their shared collective identity as *zhonghua*. As Liang Qichao observed, "historical memory was [...] a function, as well as a fount of a people's collective strength". (Kwong, 2000, p. 664) Kang continued to propagate his revisited political Confucianism to lay the foundations of the strengthening of a new China based on its moral supremacy in his *daodehui* (道德会), Morality Society. (Duara, 1997, p. 1035)

Kang Youwei died in Qingdao, Shandong in 1927. The *datongshu* was published in its entirety only in 1935.

8.3. Sun Yatsen's Moral (Inter-)Nationalism

Sun Yatsen's career was less academic than Kang Youwei's, his practical struggle for revolution left his thought scattered in speeches, letters, interviews, essays and books and even poems. All these utterances comprise what is now understood as his "thought", "Sunyatsenism" or "Sunwenyisim" as in Dai Jitao's (戴季陶) work about his thought immediately after Sun's death 1925.

Sun Yatsen was born in 1866 in Guangdong province. He was introduced to the Classics at a young age. In 1879 he attended missionary schools in Honolulu, Hawaii. In 1885 he returned to China, moved to Hong Kong, and converted to Christianity. He studied medicine in Guangzhou and Hong Kong. 1894 sent a memorandum to Li Hongzhang on how to reform China, failed and left for Hawaii to found the Xingzhong Hui (兴中会), the “Revive China Society”. The motto of the Xingzhong Hui was „Expel the Manchus, revive China, establish a unity government!“ (驱逐鞑虏，恢复中华，建立合众政府！) Around this time Sun Yatsen must have realised that Han nationalism did not enjoy significant support among the Han élites. “When [he] realized just how powerful the rival camp [the reformers, e.g. Kang Youwei] was, he gave in and adopted the broad concept of “greater Chinese nationalism” (Zhao, 2006, pp. 22-23)

Sun Yatsen was not a revolutionary in the Western sense of the word. When he was first termed a revolutionary (革命者) in the Japanese press, he recognised the useful ambiguity of the term. For his Chinese audience it meant the end of the Mandate of the Qing. According to Wang Gung-wu, “what most Chinese really understood was the idea that the Qing dynasty’s mandate was near its end and therefore the time had come to replace it.” (Wang, 1993, p. 76) For his foreign audience it meant the replacement of the political system of China with a more progressive one.

Because of a failed coup in 1895 Sun stayed in exile and was even kidnapped by Qing emissaries in London in 1896. Upon his release he left for Japan, where he was in the company of Chinese students, many of whom were critical of the state of China. In Japan, Sun formed his Pan-Asian thought opposing the “kingly way” (王道 *wangdao*) of the East, i.e. rule through moral precedent, to the “hegemonic way” (霸道 *badao*)

of the West, i.e. rule through the exercise of violence. During this period, he supported the armed struggle for independence in the Philippines from American military administration. (Chan, 1961, p. 105) Much later, in a speech to Japanese merchants in Kobe in 1924 he spoke of “Great Asianism” (亚细亚主义). (Duara, 1997, p. 1038)

In the preface to the first edition of the journal *xin yaxiya* (新亚细亚, New Asia), the his secretary and major GMD-intellectual Dai Jitao (戴季陶) saw a link between the internal stability of China and its international moral purpose:

“In order to reconstruct China, it is necessary to develop China’s border areas; in order to liberate the nationalities (minzu) of *zhonghua*, it is necessary to liberate the nationalities of the East alike”. (Duara, 1997, p. 1040)

Sun understood that Pan-Asianism could provide an alternative basis for solidarity with the non-Han. He adopted an understanding of the purpose of the Chinese revolution and the establishment of the Republic of China in this very context. For him, the independence of China was just a first stage in the great Chinese mission:

1. Secure the independence of China
2. Assist the small and weaker nations to gain their independence
3. Establish the „Great Unity“ (Chin, 1982, p. 103)

He elaborated on the second step in his 1920ies lectures:

“Only if we ‘rescue the weak and lift up the fallen’ will we be carrying out the divine obligation of our nation. We must aid the weaker and smaller peoples and oppose the great powers of the world. If all the people of the country resolve upon this purpose, our nation will prosper; otherwise, there is no

hope for us. [...] Then we will be truly ‘governing the state and pacifying the world’” (Sun 1963@49)

In 1905 Sun merged the Xingzhong Hui with other revolutionary groups in Japan into the Tongmeng Hui (同盟会), the predecessor of the Guomindang (国民党).

On October 20th 1905 Sun proposed his “Three Principles of the People” (*sanminzhuyi* 三民主义) and publicized them at a speech in Tokyo in 1906. (Chang & Gordon, 1991, p. 96)

The three principles were have been generally translated as nationalism, democracy and socialism. According to Gregor and Chang, the Three Principles seemed revolutionary to the contemporary observer, but Sun only saw them as means to achieve the advancement of society in the terms of political Confucianism. (Gregor & Chang, 1980, p. 402)

1. *Minzu zhuyi* (民族主义), “Nationalism” or “people’s racialism”

Sun considered the concept of “race” (*minzu*, 民族) applied to China is equivalent to “nation”, whereas the virtues of political Confucianism are the defining threads holding the nation together. (Chang & Gordon, 1991, p. 107)

Sun lamented the sad state of the “national spirit” (*minzujingshen* 民族精神), which decayed because of the corruption of the Qing dynasty and an overly open understanding of *tianxia* while neglecting the national essence. He said that “we must first recover our ancient morality” (Chang 1991@129) to restore the national spirit and envisioned four tasks to achieve this goal: (1) The restoration of “the eight virtues” (loyalty and filial devotion, then kindness and love, then faithfulness and justice, harmony and peace) (2) the restoration of traditional Confucian political

philosophy as laid down in the Classic “The Great Learning” (大学, *daxue*) (3) The restoration of China’s ability for technical innovation (4) The learning from the West (Chi, 1986, pp. 76-78). Sun did not represent the establishment of the Chinese nation as the ultimate goal of his efforts, but rather as an essential step in the transitional period to the world of the Great Harmony. (Gregor & Chang, 1980, p. 402) Sun portrayed the Great Harmony as the ultimate goal of all his all his struggled, his often quoted from the *liyun* chapter on *datong* the phrase *tianxia wei gong* (天下为公), „all under heaven is ruled by a communal spirit”, as his personal slogan. The phrase also is the inscription on his mausoleum.

2. *Minquan* (民权), “Democracy” or “people’s powerism”

Sun quotes the Classics in asserting that democracy was an entirely Western concept, he, like present-day CCP theoreticians, asserted that the understanding of democracy is different, because the basic understanding of the relationship between society and the individual is different. Sun negates Rousseau as he did not believe the natural rights of every individual and their equality. But he saw democracy as a global trend, which was bound to arrive in China. Opposing this global development would only lead to civil war. Sun stated that the Western democracies arose from the need to deal with overly invasive governments, whereas the Chinese have had too much personal freedom, referring to traditional system of rural self-government in the China. Western democracy would not succeed, he had to think of a “Chinese” form of democracy suited to the establishment of order in China. Sun observed that already in the Zhou dynasty the Mandate of Heaven was nothing but the Mandate of the people. The *zhou shu* of the *Book of Documents* states:

天视自我民视，天听自我民听

Heaven sees what my people see, Heaven hears what my people hear.

Sun tried to prove that in antiquity the rulers were seen as servants to the people as their mandate was to safeguard the wellbeing of the people²⁹.

3. *Minsheng* (民生), “Socialism” or “people’s livelihood”

Socialism was understood as instrumental to “moral evolution” (Gregor & Chang, 1980, p. 402) Martin Bernal suggested that Sun used the term *shehui zhuyi*, i.e. a modern term now in use for and literal translation of the term “socialism” two years before switching to the Classical term *minsheng*. For Sun, class struggle was not a cause for social progress and a means to achieve socialism, it is rather “a disease developed in the course of social progress” (Chang & Gordon, 1991, pp. 116-117) He regarded true Communism as only not product of class struggle, but rather saw its definition in very familiar terms:

故民生主义就是社会主义，又名共产主义，即是大同主义。

The ancient *minsheng zhuyi* is nothing but socialism, another name would be communism, that is the doctrine of *datong*. (Sun, 2006, p. 593)

Sun travelled extensively to raise contributions from increasingly wealthy overseas Chinese – on grounds of pre-national, non-territorial discourse of community. Revolutionary republicans, like him or Hu Hanmin, were appalled by the absence of “Chineseness” among the overseas “Chinese” except for their eagerness to receive

²⁹ In his lectures and articles he often referred to Mencius famous dictum „I have heard people say that the autocrat Zhou was killed, I have not heard the sovereign (*jun*) Zhou was killed.” (闻诛一夫纣矣，未闻弑君也)

Qing titles sold by the bankrupt Qing court. Lu Hun apparently remarked that only when he would have made them enough Chinese (*zhongguohuale*, 中国化了), they would cut off the queues, the traditional hairdo prescribed to Qing subjects. (Duara, 1997, pp. 1044-1045)

Sun Yatsen was not directly involved in the Wuchang Uprising October 10th, 1911, which led to the final province-by-province renunciation of the Qing empire in southern China. He hastened back from the U.S. to China, where he had been elected provisional president of the republic. Sun passed the presidency to general Yuan Shikai to guarantee the abdication of the Xuantong emperor and the adherence of the northern province to the revolution. For Yuan, the republic was but a dynastic change, he proclaimed in 1914:

„In ancient times the sovereigns governed the people in the name of Heaven. Such a sentiment corresponds exactly with the spirit of republicanism.“ (Williams, 1916, p. 271)

With Yuan gradually aiming at establishing a dynasty under him as emperor, Sun participated at a failed revolt and had to seek refuge in Japan. In exile, he founded the Guomindang (国民党) together with Song Jiaoren (宋教仁) to succeed the Tongmeng Hui in 1915. Sun, taking advantage of the weakness of the internationally recognised Beiyang government, returned to Guangdong and set up a provisional government.

In 1919 Sun began to revise his Three Principles of the People particularly in regards to ethnic minority relations. Many of these papers were destroyed by a fire set by the

Guangdong military governor Chen Jiongming (陈炯明) in 1922. In 1924 Sun started giving a series of lectures on the Three Principles.

In January 1923, the *Joint Manifesto of Sun and Joffe* set down the terms for cooperation between the Republic of China not yet unified under Sun and the Soviet Union. Another GMD-manifesto of the same month is emblematic to the understanding of the Chinese nation and its ethnicities:

We shall continue to work for the integration of all the peoples of our country as a single Chinese nation. With the respect to the principle of the self-determination of peoples [...], we accept this principle as favourable to the development of all the peoples within the nation and we shall also work for recognized equality among the other peoples in the world. To achieve this goal, we must enforce universal education as a means to improvement of the cultural level of the whole nation. (Kindermann, 1982, p. 85)

Chinese sovereignty or at least suzerainty is not to be confused with occupation according to Sun:

“In the past, when China was a major power, its Government had never intended to attack another country. Korea, e.g., was in a sense a vassal state of China. However, the Chinese Government left it more or less autonomous. In the last thousand years, China had merely offered Korea assistance. In contrast, Japan had only been a major power for 20 years at the time it occupied Korea. One can say, that the Chinese respect justice more so than the Japanese.” (Chin, 1982, p. 101)

It seems clear that Sun has on the one hand embraces the multi-ethnic nature of the future Chinese “nation”, on the other hand he is also aware of president Wilson’s call for the self-determination of peoples/ethnicities, which is in obvious contradiction with any understanding of China other than the Han nation. Sun affirms Chinese sovereignty over all the peoples of China by reaffirms to moral responsibility of the Chinese state to “improve the cultural level” at its fringes.

Shortly before his death in Beijing in 1925, Sun stated that all his thought was “a development and a continuation of the ancient Chinese doctrines of Confucius”. (Gregor & Chang, 1982, p. 55) Earlier in 1921 in a conversation with the representative of the Third International, Henk Sneevliet alias Maring, Sun is reported to have said:

There is a continuous moral tradition in China beginning with the ancient sage-kings down to Confucius ... The foundation of my thought is simply a perpetuation of this tradition and an expansion of it”. (Chi, 1986, p. 85)

Shortly after his death Sun’s personal secretary Dai Jitao published *The Philosophical Foundations of Sunyatsenism* (孙文主义之哲学基础). Tai had joined the Tongmeng Hui in Penang, Malaysia in 1910 in exile after having published editorials criticising the Qing government. As Sun’s personal secretary from 1912 to his death 1925, Dai must have been very familiar with the thought of „the father of the Chinese Republic“. Dai outlined how Sun’s thought originated in Confucian philosophy and roots in the moral standards of the Classics. (Chang & Gordon, 1991, p. 127)

Sun Yatsen’s success in the reform of political thought in China was in his realisation that “reviving Asian culture depends on the ability to absorb the new world culture

on the foundations of the old Asian culture.” (Duara, 1997, p. 1042) He introduced the political thought-framework of Westphalia to China not in a colonial, subjected discourse, but rather used it in combination with the *tianming* imperial design discourse to create a vision, that was both understandable and appealing to his target audience, for their continued superiority and cultural-moral mission through the nationalist struggle.

8.4. The 1958 “Manifesto to the World on Chinese Culture”

The New Confucian Movement (新儒学运动) started in Beijing after the First World War and the May 4th Movement of 1919 as an challenging movement to the cultural iconoclasm and wholesale Westernisation of the early Communist and liberal movements. The Neo-Confucianism of the 20th century fashioned itself after the Confucian Revival of the Song dynasty (960-1279), Zhu Xi’s (朱熹) then popularisation of Confucianism and the latter’s spread to Vietnam, Korea and Japan. (Tu, 2003, p. 265) The first-generation representatives Liang Shuming (梁漱溟), Xiong Shili (熊十力), He Lin (贺麟), Qian Mu (钱穆) taught at Peking University, Feng Youlan (冯友兰) and Zhang Junmai (张君勱, also known as Carsun Chang) at Tsinghua University in Beijing. Liang Shuming in his seminal work *Eastern and Western Cultures and Their Philosophies* (东西文化及其哲学) published in 1921 suggests that the future world culture would be Chinese, because it leads the middle way between the Western extreme pursuit of the satisfaction of desires and the Indian negation of the self. Zhang Junmai, who had travelled to Europe with Liang

Qichao, condemned “scientism” en vogue in the post-May 4th era in a lecture in 1923 and defended metaphysics as the just philosophical basis. (Bresciani, 2001, pp. 13-15) These eminent scholars stood for the continuous validity of the Confucian worldview and propagated such thoughts in academics and journals until the Communist takeover led them all except Feng Youlan to exile to Taiwan, Hong Kong, India in the late 1940ies.

In 1950 Qian Mu and Tang Junyi (唐君毅), a disciple of Xiong Shili, among others set up the New Asia College (新亚书院) in 1950, founding college of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Among this circle of scholars³⁰, the *Manifesto to the World Concerning the Future of Chinese Culture* was published in the January 1st, 1958 issue of the Hong Kong journal „Democratic Critique” (民主评论). It came to be seen as the “Magna Charta of the whole New Confucian Movement”. (Bresciani, 2001, p. 22) They summarised the Chinese political experience of the preceding decade and offered a Confucian alternative to complete Westernisation, Communism implied:

我们不否认，百年来中国民主建国运动活动之着着失败，曾屡使爱护中国的中国人士与世界人士，不断失望。我们亦不否认，中国文化正在生病，病至生出许多奇形怪状之赘瘤，一致失去了原形。但病人仍有活的生命。我们要治病，先要肯定病人生命之存在。不能假定病人已死。(Zhang, Tang, Mou, & Xu, 1958, p. 5)

³⁰ The Manifesto was jointly signed by Zhang Junmai, Tang Junyi and two other disciples of Xiong Shili, Mou Zongsan (牟宗三) and Xu Fuguan (徐复观)

We do not deny, that the commotions of the movement for the construction of a democratic Chinese State of the last hundred years have led to failure and have repeatedly disappointed the Chinese and international personalities who cherish China. We also do not deny that the Chinese culture is a state of sickness, the disease has led to the appearance of many wicked superfluous elements, and has led [the Chinese culture] to lose its original form. Nonetheless a sick man is still endowed with life. In order to cure him, we have to ascertain whether or not the sick is still alive. We cannot wrongly assume that a sick man is dead.

For the authors, the Confucian moral cultivation (修) provided a basis not only for the fulfilment of people's inner true nature, but also a basis for a heartfelt compliance to ethical norms leading to stable, flourishing societies.

Interestingly, around the same time even in the People's Republic of China, the societal advantages of the propagation of Confucian moral cultivation was discussed in academic conferences and papers. (Kindermann, 1963, p. 60)

The alternative development model of the Neo-Confucians served to explain the rapid industrialisation and economic development in East Asia and eventually Southeast Asia. For Berger and Hsia in their 1988 study on the very Asian development model, "the claim of Confucian ethics, as reflected in government leadership, competitive education, a disciplined work forces, principles of equality and self-reliance and self-cultivation, provides a necessary background and powerful motivating force for the rise of industrial East Asia." (Tu, 2003, p. 8))

Singapore has been a case in point ever since two reports³¹ dating from 1979 reshaped the tortuous identity statement of the Singaporean government from cosmopolitan - British-Malay-Chinese - towards a cosmopolitan - predominantly Chinese – statement. “Asian values” and the Confucian ethos, its community-first governance and “sage” -centred politics (君子, *jūnzǐ*), have since become openly dominant in Singaporean State and People’s Action Party discourse. (Tan, 2003, p. 763)

The “Shared Values White Paper”, issued in 1991, stated in this regard

The concept of government by honourable men (*jūnzǐ*) who have a duty to do right for the people and who have the trust and respect of the population, fits us better than the Western idea that a government should be given as limited powers as possible, and should always be treated with suspicion unless proven otherwise. (Tan, 2003, p. 764)

Neo-Confucians thus provided an alternative path with native answers to the pressures of Western modernisation along Talcott Parsons’ three dimensions (market economy, democratic polity, individualism) and the symbolic resources to go that path, which most obviously served well the ruling élites in industrial East Asia since the 1960ies (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore) and in socialist East Asia (China, Vietnam and to some extent North Korea) since the 1980ies. (Tu, 2000, pp. 200-204)

³¹ “Goh Keng Swee education report” (Education Study Team, Report on the Ministry of Education, 1978) and the “Ong Teng Cheong moral education report” (Moral Education Committee, Report on Moral Education, 1979)

9. The People's Republic's Moral Order

9.1. The Great Unity in the Early Thought of Mao Zedong

Mao Zedong (毛泽东), was born in 1893 in Shaoshan, Hunan province. He read the works of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao in his youth and read a *Tongmeng Hui*. He later portrays himself as to have taken great interest in the communal theories of Hong Xiuquan (洪秀全), the founder of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in the middle of the 19th century, at an early age. The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom advocated a idiosyncratic version of the Great Unity theory, which combined Christian beliefs with the native Chinese *datong* concept. Hong's ideal society was fashioned according to the principle *tianxia yijia, gongxiang taiping* (天下一家, 共享太平), "all under Heaven is one family, relish together the Ultimate Peace" Hong spelled out his vision in *The Land System of the Heavenly Kingdom* (天朝田亩制度) in 1853

有田同耕，有饭同食，有衣同穿，有钱同使，无处不均匀，无人不饱暖 (Bi, 2008, p. 24)

The fields are commonly worked on, the meals are commonly eaten, the money is commonly used, nowhere are there disparities, no person is not sufficiently fed and warmed.

In his late youth he read translations of Western literature such as Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, Huxley, Miller, Spencer, Montesquieu and Rousseau. At the age of 20 he started receiving education in the Chinese Classics

and Neo-Confucianism at the Hunan Fourth Middle School in Changsha, the provincial capital. He was introduced to Chen Duxiu's (陈独秀) magazine *La Jeunesse* (新青年) in 1915 and established a preference to the writings of Chen and Li Dazhao (李大钊), both considered the founding fathers of the Chinese Communist Party as well as Hu Shi (胡适).

In 1971 Mao recalled,

我读了六年孔夫子的书，又读了七年资本主义的书，到 1918 年才读马列主义 (Xia & Du, 2010, p. 79)

I've read the books of Confucius for six years, I've read capitalist books for seven years, and only by 1918 I started studying Marxism and Leninism.

It seems that already his thoughts had been revolving around the Great Unity concept before being introduced to Marxism and Leninism, in one letter to his friend Li Jinxi (黎锦熙) in 1917 he wrote,

大同者无人之鹄也 (Zhang, 2006, p. 19)

We all look eagerly forward to the coming of the Great Unity.

After being introduced to Li by his teacher Yang Changji (杨昌济), he travelled to Beijing to raise funds for revolt in his home province Hunan and too an administrative job at the library of Peking University in Beijing in 1918. One year later, Mao returned to Hunan via Qufu, paying homage at the Confucius shrine, and brought along the new ideas of Marxism and started publishing a weekly called the *Xiang River Commentaries* (湘江评论) to eulogize the Russian October Revolution,

which was soon banned by local authorities. (Lynch, 2006, p. 43) He called for a „doctrine of the common people“ (平民主义), a socialist doctrine to “overthrow all kinds of power [...] including power in the international realm”, the prime function of which was to cope with Japanese aggression. (Ip, 1994, p. 37)

On December 1st 1919, he published an article in the “Hunan Education Monthly” (湖南教育月刊) with the title *The Work of the Students* (学生之工作) called for the adoption of “new villagism” (新村主义) as in the atarashiki-mura (“new village”) utopian commune set up by Saneatsu Mushanokōji one year earlier in Japan. This commune is a Kibbutz-like intentional community, still existing in two Japanese locations.

In 1920 Mao travelled again to Beijing. The same year he read *The Communist Manifesto* for the first time upon the recommendation of his friend Cai Hesen (蔡和森). In a letter to Cai in January 1921 he said to have accepted that the Marxist revolutionary path was the only way forward in China.

The Chinese Communist Party was founded in July 1921 in Shanghai. Mao had set up two Communist groupings in Hunan, the „Socialist Youth League“ (社会主义青年团) and the „Hunan Self-Study University“ (湖南自修大学). Mao attended the founding meeting of the CCP in Shanghai upon invitation of Li Dazhao. (Lynch, 2006, pp. 49-50)

18 years of armed struggle later, on June 30th, 1949, shortly before the proclamation of the People’s Republic on October 1st, Mao delivered a speech delineating his vision of the mandate of the CCP titled *On the Democratic Dictatorship of the People*. He directly mentioned Kang Youwei’s ideal it:

经过人民共和国到达社会主义和共产主义，到达阶级的消灭和世界的大同。康有为写了“大同书”，他没有也不可能找到一条到达大同的路。资产阶级的共和国，外国有过的，中国不能有，因为中国是受帝国主义压迫的国家。唯一的路是经过工人阶级领导的人民共和国 (Bi, 2008, p. 25)

[we will] through the People's Republic reach Socialism and Communism, achieve the elimination of classes and the *datong* of the world. When Kang Youwei wrote „The Book on Great Unity“, he did not and could not find a path towards the Great Unity. Foreign countries may be capitalist class republics; China cannot be one, because China is country that suffered under the imperialism. The only way [to reach the Great Unity] is through the People's Republic under the leadership of the working class.

Chinese orthodox historiography tends to stress the universal validity of Marxism-Leninism and its “scientific” philosophy void of traditional, “feudal” Chinese heritage. This view is only very recently being challenged in Chinese publications, such as Zhang (2006), Guan (2009), Xia (2010) and Dong (2011), which refer to the essentially Confucian idea of the Great Unity as „traditional socialism“.

Zhang Lanying's (2006) study in regards concludes that

传统社会主义可以通过马克思主义的指导，统一全国人民的意志；通过共产党的领导，组织全国人民进行社会主义建设，并形成社会动员力。(Zhang, 2006, p. 19)

“Traditional socialism” was able to unite the people's aspirations of the whole nation through the guidance of Marxism; through the leadership of the CCP,

it organised the people of the whole nation to build socialism and constitutes a driving force of social mobilisation.”

These recent Chinese publications generally view the influence of traditional thought on Mao as positive and conducive to his later adoption of communism. Bi Guoming's (2008) CCP Party School journal study agrees, but also claims that the excesses of the Great Leap Forward (1958) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) to Mao's impatience in the advent of the Great Unity. (Bi, 2008, p. 26)

Nick Knight's study (1996) sees Mao openly embracing the *datong* concept with a initially positive outlook towards the future. The CCP's struggle, in Knight's understanding of Mao's worldview, developed according to the Marxist five-stage periodization of history as well as according to the classical *sanshi* periodization of the new-text Confucian *gongyang* School. According to Knight, after the 1950ies the mentioning of the realization of Communism, i.e. the Great Unity, assumed a hollow “ritualistic character”. (Knight, 1996)

Of course, the ideological causes for the disastrous policies of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution are much more complex than Bi's analysis and Knight does not answer the question of why, even if Mao's references to the Great Unity were but ritualistic, it continued to be evoked and motivated millions of people to previously unheard of sacrifices and crimes. Nevertheless Bi's recent assertion might lead to more research in the field as emotional distance to these events slowly takes hold.

9.2. The Sinification of Marxism

Orthodox CCP history identifies the May 4th Movement (五四运动) as its moment of spiritual birth, when on May 4th 1919 students and workers in Beijing and major cities demonstrated against the Versailles Treaty's provisions on China. The May 4th movement was a larger cultural movement as a collective search for a new identity for China in a time political and cultural disintegration. The classical teachings had to be replaced by Western science, the collectivist approach to society was abandoned by some young authors and for the first time individual feelings took the prime space in literature, modernity was searched in the West and through it China to be fundamentally changed. For Benjamin Schwartz, the May 4th intellectuals were particularly receptive to Marxism because of its Western origin and it yet being critical to the state of Western societies. For Dirlik, initial interest in socialism gave birth, which after the frustrations of political suppression radicalised into increased receptivity to the Bolshevik model and anarchism. (Ip, 1994, p. 34)

Chen Duxiu, one of the founders of the CCP, was one of the forerunners of the New Culture Movement (新文化运动), he proclaimed:

„some people charge us with the crime of destruction: the destruction of Confucianism, ritual, national essence, chastity, the established social and familial relationships, traditional art and religion, the literary heritage, and finally, the existing political system. We admit the charge but still insist that we are innocent. It is our love for Mr. Democracy and Mr. Science that leads to these towering crimes. (Ip, 1994, p. 35)

The early Chinese communism of the 1920ies was considered a “scientific” philosophy simply reflecting the forces of production and the unchangeable

development in history towards true communism by means of class struggle. Evolutionary theory and class struggle were the “scientific” basis for change in China, Confucianism was but a symptom of a “feudal” society. As Lu Xun, a literary protagonist of the 20th century, wrote a year before the May 4th Movement, the old teachings are emblematic of a “man-eating” society. In his *Diary of a Madman* he called upon his compatriots to “save the children”.

Still, 19 years after the May 4th Movement, the then unrivalled leader of the CCP, Mao Zedong, called for the “Sinification of Marxism” (马克思主义中国化). This seems like a complete abjuration of the founding values of the Communist Party of China, namely to incorporate, in Marxian terms, elements of the superstructure of the previous historical stage into the present stage.

Raymond F. Wylie traced the development of the term to Chen Boda’s writings and Mao himself. Chen Boda (陈伯达) joined the CCP in 1927 and became a key ideological thinker when he joined the communist government in Yan’an ten years later shaping the Chinese orthodox understanding of communism before the establishment of the People’s Republic. He was in a leading position during the early period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, eventually purged and then did not participate in public life until his death in 1989. (Wylie, 2006)

Sinification, according to Wylie, has to be understood in two ways: politically and culturally.

Politically, it refers to the ways in which the foreign theory of Marxism-Leninism is adapted to the Chinese socio-political conditions, such as the absence of a large-scale urban proletariat, the dominant role of the peasantry.

More relevant to this thesis is the cultural dimension, the perceived need to reconcile the foreign ideas with what Chinese intellectuals at the time called the “national essence” (国粹). (Wylie, 2008, p. 180)

Chen argued in 1936 that Marxists, while considering himself being one, should criticise themselves for failing in providing a systematic critique of China’s old political thought, i.e. political Confucianism, and for not integrating Marxist theory in the political practise in China. For Chen, it was necessary “to defend the best traditions in Chinese culture”. The theory of Marxism-Leninism combined with the practise of “the best traditions” would lead to an enriched, superior form of Marxism. (Wylie, 2008, pp. 182-183) This assumption contradicts the understanding of universal validity in of the “scientific” philosophy he was taught in Moscow and could be seen as the ancient attempt of assuming cultural superiority, even though in the “form” of Marxism-Leninism. Chen states that

The real task of our philosophy is to transform the world, but in our present circumstances the task of our philosophy is to serve the defence of the motherland. Our philosophy, which will liberate all mankind, but at the same time it is also the present patriotic philosophy of us Chinese people. Our new philosophy is not abstract dogma [...] it becomes the guide of every progressive cause. (Wylie, 2008, p. 184)

Mao Zedong, probably without being aware of Chen Boda’s thought at the time, stated in 1937 that Leninism is but the union of Marxist theory and Russian practise. But Leninism is not simply their combination, but rather an advancement of Marxist theory. China does necessitate a union of Marxist theory and Chinese practise to

further elevate Marxism-Leninism. (Wylie, 2008, p. 184) For Mao, Chinese practise did not necessarily equate the native political thought, but rather reflected conditions on the “battleground” of the class struggle and was in line with those who wanted the Chinese traditional thought extinguished. Mao, Wylie assumes, changed his stand on this issue because of Chen Boda, who in Yan’an soon became his political secretary. For Chen, a new theory that would combine the theory of Marxism-Leninism with Chinese reality, i.e. discourse, was a the foundation to “establish a living relationship between Marxism and Chinese culture, make Marxism more acceptable to the average Chinese person – and very importantly – symbolize China’s cultural independence from the West” (Wylie, 2008, p. 193) Mao used the concept of Sinification of Marxism to attack his rival Wang Ming and the Returned Students sticking to their Russian teachers’ culture-void interpretation of Marxism-Leninism in the 6th Plenum of the 6th National Congress of the CCP in October 1938. In his report to the 6th Plenum he said

学习我们的历史遗产，用马克思主义的方法给以批判的总结。。今天的中国是历史的中国之一发展。我们是马克思主义的历史主义者。我们不应该割断历史。从孔夫子道孙中山我们应该以总结。我们要继承这一份珍宝的遗产。(Wylie, 2006, p. 59)

We have to study our historical heritage, use the method of Marxism to critically combine it. Today’s China is a development of the historical China. We are the historicists of Marxism. We should not separate history. We should combine [the development of political thought] from Confucius to Sun Yatsen. We should continue to recognise this precious heritage.

Mao copied the term *zhongguohua* from a newspaper article Chen wrote in July 1938 in which he said that communism is not a foreign idea. For Chen, communism

is something which has been dreamed of for several thousands of years by the most outstanding representatives of our nation. Mozi, one of our country's ancient philosophers [...] used to dream of this society. (Wylie, 2008, p. 194)

Chen Boda thus laid the ideological groundwork for a much more widespread appeal of the CCP among the urban intelligentsia just as well as under the rural élite than ever could have happened with a culturally-void interpretation of Marxism-Leninism in this crucial years of the takeover of all of China; those who call for communism were satisfied with these words as they read it in terms of the first stage of Lenin's understanding of the two-stage revolution ("Democracy and Narodism in China", published in 1912) those who feared the loss of Chinese identity had a hope to cling to as Japanese troops ravaged through the coastal cities and the GMD's hold on power increasingly saw itself weakened. (Van der Kroef, 1962, p. 23) The term "Sinification" was although soon dismissed as "non-scientific" and replaced with a new term "Mao Zedong thought" (毛泽东思想), stressing its Chinese provenance. (Wylie, 2006, p. 61)

Arthur F. Wright published as early as 1953 his views of the use of symbols in Modern China, in which he observed that „the Chinese Communists, in their bid for power, played upon Chinese longings for a community-wide synthesis of values and institutions; they suggested that Marxism-Leninism alone offered a basis on which such a synthesis could be creates. They reinforced this appeal by claiming for a

Communist order the same universality that Chinese had for centuries claimed for their Confucian synthesis of institutions and values. (Wright, 1953, pp. 31-32)

Wu Yuzhang (吴玉章), early Communist and later first dean of People's University in Beijing, wrote in his memoirs that

社会主义书籍所描绘的人人平等消灭贫穷的远大理想大大地鼓舞了我，使我联想起孙中山先生倡导的三民主义和中国古代世界大同学说，所有这些东西，在我脑子里交织成了一幅未来社会美好远景。(Zhang, 2002/2005, p. 19)

The far-reaching ideal of the equality of all men etc., the eradication of poverty which has been described in the socialist books inspired me profoundly, it reminded me of the Three Principles of the People advocated by Mr Sun Yatsen and the theory of the Great Unity of the world in the ancient China, all these things woven together in my brain created a beautiful prospect for the future of society.

One therefore has to disagree with the thesis that the advent of the People's Republic of China signified the final formal death warrant to political Confucianism. The imaginary of the Great Unity, its moral mission remained central to the political discourse. The violent class struggle substituted the gradual harmonisation of societal relations as the means of getting there, but the ultimate goal was a native and familiar one. One thus has to negate Dirlik's thesis that

[Confucianism] had articulated the interests of the "feudal" ruling class. It would, therefore, inevitably die a natural death as China became capitalist and communist, [...] Confucianism could be preserved as a mark of Chinese

national identity, but only in its relegation to a condemned past. (Dirlik, 1995, pp. 230-231)

Another striking aspect is how orthodoxy was maintained by the same means. Mao Zedong perceived the accepted role of a sovereign ideology, namely political Confucianism, in imperial China and how this sovereignty was perpetuated.

He once said:

“Even if the importance of material incentive is recognized it is never the sole principle. There is always another principle, namely, spiritual inspiration from political ideology.” (Ling, 1994, p. 398)

The fundamental role education in élite recruitment was maintained with indoctrination. All aspiring bureaucrats had to be fully indoctrinated in the official orthodoxy before government service and to this day, although in a hollowed form, still have to.

The CCP changed thus changed the official *zhonghua* State-orthodoxy to Marxism-Leninism, but it retained the ideological role of education. Ling notes “The CCP, however, exceeds its imperial predecessors by instituting ‘political secretariats’ and ideological ‘study groups’ in all walks of Chinese life.” (Ling, 1994, p. 398)

9.3. Leadership among the World’s Oppressed Peoples

According to the late Sinologist Albert Feuerwerker, “the primary role [‘of the ideology of the Maoist ecumene’] is akin to that of the Confucian tribute system ideology of old; that is, as a source of legitimacy for the rulers of the P.R.C. within their nation and among the communist nations and communist parties of the world.

The ability to describe external events for this audience in terms that seem to endorse the infallibility of the Maoist leadership is of some consequence for securing domestic support for the genuinely ideological program of reshaping Chinese society.” (Feuerwerker, 1972, p. 10) Foreign policy was used, according to Feuerwerker’s analysis, as a tool for generating internal legitimacy. The idea, if universally valid, had to be universally spread.

Feuerwerker identified a list of the five factors of foreign policy up to the 1970ies in decreasing order of importance:

1. Nationalism
2. The politics of the International Communist movement
3. China’s domestic politics
4. Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology
5. A strategic imagery based on a traditional spatial-ideological world order

(Feuerwerker, 1972, p. 5)

Earlier, in 1959, Dai Sheng-yu saw three factors:

1. The cultural confidence of the imperial Chinese tradition
2. The psychological energy of modern Chinese nationalism
3. The political aggressiveness of contemporary Chinese Communism

(Dai, 1959, p. 112)

Of course, the foreign policy of the young People’s Republic, formally founded on October 1st 1949, was strongly constrained by economic and security considerations. Imminent security considerations led to military action in Korea in 1950. The need for economic and technological recovery and advancement pushed towards the Leaning towards one side support of late Stalin’s Soviet Union. But these pragmatic

policies with profound internal impact had to be explained at home in a way that the pragmatic actions were justified and the mandate of the CCP strengthened. While Feuerwerker's list is a valid enumeration, the list distracts from the most important apparant contraction in early PRC foreign policy: One the one hand, territorial sovereignty had to be upheld as the most precious good of the state once unification had been achieved. On the other hand, the governing élite had to stick to the deeply felt moral *mission civilisatrice* of its own ideological superiority. This *mission* derived both from socialist worker solidarity ("Long live the unity between the peoples of the world!" still inscribed on the Tian'anmen of the Forbidden City in Beijing) and from the traditional Great Unity ideal.

The discourse within China in regards to its early foreign affairs, i.e. "United Front", the "spread of the revolution" etc., is to understand how the non-Westphalian civilizational understanding of world order adapted itself and thus survived if not in literal content, but at least in the subjective understanding of the framework (i.e. the "self" and the "other") and ultimate goal.

The framework had become more complicated than ever before, because now two separate understandings of the self had emerged. One according to ethnic terms, whereas the Overseas Chinese or *huaqiao* (华侨) had to be included into the Chinese cultural (thus political) community and one according to ideological terms, whereas the suppressed proletariat in all nations had to be included into the Communist ideological (thus political) community.

Pragmatist decisions and a differentiated approach solved the conundrum.

The differentiated approach has to be understood in a distinction drawn between dominion in terms of territorial monopoly of force and dominion in terms of identity, be that ideological and/or ethnical.

In regards to dominion in terms of territorial monopoly of force, the early Communist government had to dispel fears among its neighbours on the questions of unsettled border demarcations and claims of sovereignty by China.

In regards to dominion in terms of identity, the early Communist government had to dispel fears (1) among the South East Asian countries with large Chinese minorities such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaya and Vietnam on its influence on the latter and (2) among the third world in general on the Chinese support for communist insurgencies.

While addressing those fears to establish sustainable foreign relations, the early PRC government had to portray itself assertive in terms of safeguarding the territorial integrity of the Chinese state and in a leadership role among those it considered part of the “self”, i.e. overseas Chinese in ethnical terms and foreign communist rebels in ideological terms. The early foreign policy of the PRC is to be seen as the learning period of PRC on how to act within the Westphalian system while at the same time addressing the necessities of its inherited worldview pervaded by political Confucianism. Upon suggestions by the CCP Southern Bureau to establish “institutions specifically in charge of international propaganda” (建立专门负责国际宣传的机关), a first *Directive from the Chinese Communist Central Committee regarding Foreign Relations Work* (中共中央关于外交工作的指示) was issued in August 1944 in the Yan’an revolutionary base. It stressed that the initial focus of diplomatic efforts

应放在扩大我们的影响，争取国际合作上面。(Yang, 2010, p. 64)

should be on the expansion of international impact and the attainment of foreign cooperation.

It continued, “the word of diplomacy started with the internationalizing of our united front” and “the domestic united front policy can be transplanted onto the word of establishing the international united front”(quoted in (Yang, 2009, p. 131)) The revolutionary policy was officially redrafted in 1949. In regards relevant to this thesis, State Vice-Chairman Liu Shaoqi (刘少奇) held a speech on the direction of Chinese foreign policy at the Asia Committee Conference of the World Workers’ Council (世界工人理事会亚洲委员会会议) in Beijing

号召亚洲—印度支那国家、缅甸、印度、印度尼西亚、马来亚等国的工人阶级公开进行反对帝国主义的武装斗争。(Yang, 2010, p. 68)

calling upon the working class of Indochina, Burma, India, Indonesia, Malaya etc. to openly carry out armed struggle against imperialism.

In one of many similar statements Chief of Staff of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Luo Ronghuan (罗荣桓) reportedly stated in October 1950 that „the world relies on the thought of Mao Zedong [... which] belongs not only to China but also has its international implications. Accordingly, Marshal Yejing declared, “the nations which have not yet been liberated also want to overthrow imperialism and feudalism [...] and to wage armed struggle. They very much need our experience. Therefore, we

should sum up our experience [...] to present it to our friends. (Tang, 2000, pp. 329-330)

In the early 1950s the PRC government established nearly two dozen internationally oriented “people’s organizations” such as the Chinese People’s Association for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (中国人民对外友好协会), the Chinese People’s Institute for Foreign Affairs (中国人民外交学会) etc., which brought a steady stream of foreign cultural delegations.³²

The PRC government also established the Commission on Overseas Chinese Affairs (华侨事务委员会) in 1949. The institution still exists as the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (国务院侨务办公室) as an organ of the State Council to this day, asserting its claims of dominion/responsibility over these overseas minorities. (Buss, 1951, pp. 211-212)

When Stalin died in 1953 and the Soviets introduced a more moderate stance of “peaceful coexistence” in the third world, the Chinese leadership had to rethink its own direction or face isolation. The Chinese stance at the Geneva Conference in 1954 on the fate of French Indochina and the Korean Peninsula showed a turn in Chinese strategy. China disbanded overseas Chinese Communist associations and urged overseas Chinese to seek citizenship in their countries of residence. (Yang, 2009, p. 138) This new policy line was repeated at the Bandung Conference in 1955. The declaration of the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence”, or *Pancha Sila* as first advocated by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, were wholeheartedly

³² By 1956, the Beijing government claimed to have developed cultural ties with 75 countries, more countries than have recognised the Communist government. (Dai, 1959, p. 118)

embraced by Zhou Enlai in the wake of the Conference. China, ever since, vocally supported the principles as the basis of its foreign relations:

- Mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity (互相尊重主权和领土完整)
- Mutual non-aggression (互不侵犯)
- Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs (互不干涉内政)
- Equality and mutual benefit (平等互利)
- Peaceful co-existence (和平共处)

Beijing in embracing the above principles tried to put itself at the helm of a “morally” oriented Third World fighting imperialist oppression and in contrast to the imperialists respecting the self-determination of peoples. Friendship treaties and border agreements were portrayed in China as emblematic of the generous leadership of China among those on the right side of history.

At the very same time Mao Zedong denounced the Khrushchev’s understanding of peaceful coexistence, stating that “without the eradication of imperialism or the total elimination of the bourgeoisie’s rule, then there cannot be world peace” (Yang, 2009, p. 139). In his inauguratory speech of the 8th CCP National Congress in 1956, he said

亚洲、非洲和拉丁美洲各国的民族独立解放运动，以及世界上一切国家的和平运动和正义斗争，我们都必须给以积极的支持。

We must give active support to the national independence liberation movement in countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America as well as to the peace movement and to just struggles in all countries throughout the world.

Thus the Chinese government contributed 6 % of its annual expenditure to aid revolutionary insurgencies such as in Vietnam, Afghanistan and even Albania. The material and financial aid to the Indonesian Communist Party led to the escalation of its relations with the government in Jakarta and its annihilation in 1965 by the military junta. (Yang, 2009, p. 142) In Burma, one of the first countries to recognize the PRC, China worked through the Democratic League to advance its interests. In the Malayan Federation, the Communist Party of Malaya received active support by China, its membership being predominantly ethnically Chinese. In the Philippines, China reportedly assisted and directed operations in the Hukbalahap rebellion. (Buss, 1951, pp. 204-209)

In 1952, China fought India over disputed Arunachal Pradesh. China was not willing to accept the MacMahon line as the border demarcation, even though China accepted it with its border agreement with Bhutan. Of course, Indian influence in Tibet after the Dalai Lama's refuge to Dharamsala played a role in the conflict. The repression of the 1959 uprising in Tibet, the increasingly aggressive rhetoric of the CCP leadership and an actual war with the other great Third World power India undoubtedly diminished the PRC's "moral" credibility in the Third World and its guidance by the "Bandung spirit". Zhou Enlai toured Africa in 1963-64 calling for revolutions in the continent stressing China's ties with the recently decolonised native leaderships such as in Uganda, Burundi, Zanzibar and Tanganyika. A meeting of the heads of states of francophone African states in Nouakchott, Mauritania, in 1965 denounced the subversive influence of unnamed foreign powers in Africa, obviously directed at Chinese involvement in the internal power wrangling in Brazzaville-Congo, Burundi, Cameroon and Ghana. (Vahlefeld, 1970, p. 287) The

same year, the massacre leading to the annihilation of the Indonesian Communist Party strained the relations between Indonesia, the host country of the Bandung Conference, and China. At the same time, negotiations for a follow-up conference to Bandung in Algiers failed because of Chinese insistence on the exclusion of the Soviet Union. (Vahlefeld, 1970, p. 287)

China failed to assume its leadership of the Third World countries because it had to follow internal pressures to continually project itself in a “moral” world leadership position. The radicalisation continued unabated with the beginnings of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. In a landmark speech “Long Live the Victory of the People’s War” commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the fight against the Japanese invasion, Marshal Lin Biao (林彪) said in 1965,

中国人民革命战争的胜利 [...] 促进了各国人民的革命运动。从此，亚洲，非洲和拉丁美洲的民族解放运动进入一个新的历史时期。 (Wang, 2003, p. 162)

The Victory of the People’s Revolutionary War advanced the revolutionary movements of the peoples of every country. Since then, the peoples’ liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America entered a new historical stage.

In the month of the official start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, May 1966, Lin Biao stated that “Chairman Mao commands the highest prestige in the nation and the whole world” (Bridgham, 1971, p. 333) The directives issued on May 16th 1966 revealed that the main source of “revisionism” was to be located in the highest levels of party leadership. Diplomatic staff was called back to China from all diplomatic missions except the embassy in Cairo to undergo ideological training. The

Foreign Minister, Chen Yi (陈毅), had to undergo several sessions of public self-criticism in front of masses of Red Guards. Mao decided to „revolutionize foreign affairs“, i.e. to convert China’s embassies into propaganda centres for spreading the Cultural Revolution abroad. A Communiqué adopted in August by the CCP Central Committee emphasised that “China’s foreign policy” would be guided by the “supreme principle” of “proletarian internationalism” (无产阶级国际主义). Chen Yi, after several sessions of public self-criticism, issued a directive in March 1967 ordering diplomatic staff „to cooperate with the youth and propagante Mao’s thought with every possible means, legitimate and secret“. (Bridgham, 1971, p. 337)

Bridgham notes that the radicalisation of foreign policy during the Cultural Revolution did not have the anticipated effect in the Third World, but, if any, influenced the student demonstrations in Europe and Japan. Chinese observers hyped the effect of the radical influence of Maoism on foreign students, which were praised in mass demonstrations all over China. This is to show that the „export“ of Maoism only served to prove the validity of the radical turn in domestic politics. The already mentioned study of Bi Guoming (2008) shows that only very recently Chinese observers have started explaining the justifications of the Cultural Revolution as then misunderstandings or contortions of traditional Chinese thought. For Bi, Mao succumbed to impatience in the realisation of the Great Unity. (Bi, 2008, p. 26) While the more pragmatic power struggle considerations provide much stronger arguments explaining Mao and the CCP élite behaviour at the time, it seems revealing how the spread of a moral “culture” to “barbarians” was used and understood by these Red Guards smashing all that’s old as a legitimate reflection of their right cause.

Very soon it became apparent that this kind of foreign policy was not sustainable in the long run and was a great risk. The more legitimising capital was put in “proletarian internationalism”, the more delusion the visible failure of the latter would cause in the domestic context. In 1969, Lin Biao relativized the previous foreign policy characterized mainly by “proletarian internationalism” in his report to the 9th CCP Nation Congress. He listed three „interrelated and indivisible“ principles of Chinese foreign policy: (1) proletarian internationalism”, (2) support for the revolutionary struggle of oppressed peoples, (3) peaceful co-existence according to the *pancha sila* with countries with different social systems. (Bridgham, 1971, p. 344) This return to the old bifurcated line of reasoning, i.e. exporting yet non-interfering, allowed for much more flexible approach to international issues and revealed itself much more useful to the gain of international recognition by the PRC. The shift towards moderation was explained as the return to normalcy. According to Mao’s interviews with Edgar Snow, the excesses were caused by the misleading actions of an ultra-leftist group around Chen Boda.

Liu Shaoqi: “On intra-party struggle” the party, as enlightened leadership group, must continually purify itself by struggle. (self-cultivation)

9.4. The Anti-Confucius Campaign 1973-1975

Confucius, of course, came to be seen as the ideological architect of the feudal society of ancient China and alluring to his legacy equalled the most profound condemnation in the orthodox discourse (e.g. social hierarchy vs. equality, reform vs. revolution, social stability vs. class struggle, etc.) The early influence and adoption of the imaginary of political Confucianism does not necessarily equate with a publicly stated advocacy of it. The significations in this regard of the so-called „Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius Campaign“ (批林批孔运动) is thus to elucidate the fundamental difference between the condemnation of Confucius for contemporary short-term political goals and their representation and the continuing influence of political Confucianism in long-term policy and its representation.

Lin Biao (林彪) was an early military leader of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), having joined in 1927 and risen to the rank of marshal in 1955. Lin was crucial in the political radicalisation of the PLA and the creation of the personality cult around Mao Zedong prior to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. At the CCP's 9th Congress in 1969 the then defence minister was elevated to Vice-Chairman of CCP and successor to Mao Zedong. Lin died in a plane crash in 1971 over Mongolia. Officially, he was blamed for a coup against Mao and wanted seek refuge in the Soviet Union.

The origin and purpose of the „Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius Campaign“ is shrouded in mystery just as much as Lin's demise had been. It started around the time of the 10th Party Congress in 1973, when Nixon had just visited China and the excesses of the Cultural Revolution had come to an end and three factions within the leadership where manoeuvring for their visions of the future of China: (1) The

radical “Gang of Four” (四人帮), i.e. Mao’s wife Jiang Qing (江青), Zhang Chunqiao (张春桥), Yao Wenyuan (姚文元) and Wang Hongwen (王洪文), who politically benefited from the Cultural Revolution and attacked the trend for “retrogression and restoration” negating the Cultural Revolution. (2) The established Party elders and bureaucrats such as premier Zhou Enlai (周恩来) and the just rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping (邓小平). (3) The PLA leaders who retained good standing after the fall of Lin Biao.

These factions filled the Campaign against Lin and Confucius with the content that suited their conflicting agendas, whereas Mao publicly maintained a posture as final arbiter. (Chang, 1974, pp. 871-874)

For Merle Goldman, the campaign was predominantly filled with content by the regime establishment around Zhou Enlai against the regional military commanders and the radicals. It invoked the Qin Shihuang and the Legalists to promote centralization, institutionalization and pragmatism against ideological orthodoxy and decentralisation. (Goldman, 1975, pp. 435-439) For James Gregor and Maria Chiang, the campaign was predominantly filled with content by the radicals of and around the Gang of Four. Emblematic was the publication of *Apriorism in the History of Chinese Philosophy* (哲学史上的先验论) at Peking University in late 1972, stating that both Liu Shaoqi (purged, establishment Chairman of the PRC, who died in detention during the Cultural Revolution) and Lin Biao both worshipped at the shrine of Confucius and had been working against the achievements of the Cultural Revolution. (Gregor & Chang, 1979, pp. 252-253) The campaign for them was to “go against the tide” and repress the revisionist, moderate agenda. Present-day

analysts mock the return of publicly advocated Confucian teachings in the PRC by anecdotally juxtaposing it to the Anti-Confucius Campaign four decades earlier.

The Campaign actually but reflected the presence of Confucius in the political imaginary during the most radical of times in the People's Republic and the astute flexibility of both moderate and radical factions in using the presence of political Confucianism in conveying their political messages.

10. Internal Impact and Response to the Recent International Development of China

10.1. Truth, Benevolence and Glory in Moderation and Dissent

How could the CCP stay in power after it shattered the lives of millions, destroyed the cultural heritage of a state of several nations, and without its great helmsman Mao Zedong after his death in 1976? The answer for those who successfully plotted against the Gang of Four was a declaration of the adoption of pragmatism (“seek truth from facts” 实事求是) in the pursuit of new internal and international policies to sustain CCP power. Lucien Pye in a paper on Chinese pragmatism in the 1980ies wrote, “we tend to suppose that somehow pragmatism is simply a pure form of rationality, untainted by cultural biases. Yet in truth there is no such thing as value-neutral, culture-free pragmatism.” (Pye, 1986, p. 207) Chinese pragmatism of Reform and Opening up indeed was not culture-free and reflected in its declared wish of integration into the Western world a “Chineseness” which Western observers mostly judged of anecdotal importance. The experience of more than thirty years of Reform and Opening up prove that the successful adaption of older discourses allowed the CCP to stay in power, because it managed to communicate to its clientele the only authentic identity option to them is to be “Chinese”, i.e. a great power culture-nation, and to be “Communist”, i.e. a power with the “morally right” vision of ultimate human development.

The CCP has been able to overcome several great challenges to its rule by exactly framing its identity within the political Confucian worldview.

Pragmatism in foreign policy served economic purposes, allowed vast technological exchange and foreign trade, and hence realised unprecedented economic development. But pragmatism has not only been a deliberate policy choice, but also a deliberate discursive choice, that is a discursive choice with two target groups. A first target group has been the outside world, making up for the lost trust in Chinese government rationality and allowing foreign observers to project their most diverse aspirations onto an ideological *carte blanche*. But the real target group has been the domestic public opinion. In light of its own authoritarianism, the CCP continually has to convince its subjects of its political legitimacy.

In regards to foreign policy, Lowell Dittmer provides several characterising points of continuity Chinese foreign policy since Reform and Opening most diplomats and journalists posted in China can agree on easily:

1. a goal-oriented foreign policy
2. a tendency to rhetorical hyperbole and a language of absolute values and norms (“principles”)
3. a penchant for ‘preceptorial diplomacy’, persuading other countries to parrot “principles” to establish a common narrative (Dittmer, 2001, p. 172)

For foreign diplomats and journalists, the second and third points constitute sometimes frustrating, sometimes even amusing Chinese peculiarities. For those who shape Chinese policy, they are part of the lifeline of the ideological legitimacy of the CCP, namely projection of international consensus through Chinese moral leadership to the outside.

Wang Gung-wu’s analysis of the beginning of idealistic Communist China in 1949 is just as valid for the beginning of pragmatic Communist China in 1978: “most people

in China look upon the Party cadres as having seized the reins of power from the traditional mandarins. [...] As long as they also manifested a similar aura of moral integrity and respect for learning, they would indeed be seen as having successfully replaced the old discredited literati. The new revolutionary elites were expected to be superior, more modern, efficient, and caring than the corrupt representatives of a bankrupt tradition“ (Wang, 1993, p. 85). The foundation of policy, i.e. benevolence, and the ultimate goal of political cooperation, *datong* or at least *xiaokang*, were the same.

Deng Xiaoping evoked the concept of “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics” (中国特色社会主义) at the 12th Party Congress in 1982. With this he later explained that China had to “achieve the equivalent of advanced capitalism by building a ‘commodity economy’ before it will be ready for socialism, to say nothing of communism. [...] Socialism with Chinese Characteristics thus means [...] that China must develop a ‘commodity economy’ under the leadership of the Party before attempting to jump to socialism.” (Pye, 1986, p. 211)

Of course, the CCP was challenged by its imperfect worldview and the manifold policy choice moments on which way China was to go.

The most critical moment undoubtedly was the Tian’anmen movement in 1989. Prior to it, a series of works denouncing “Chineseness” circulated widely and contributed to a general climate of discontent against corruption, censorship and unbalanced economic progress. These works were the product of a “culture fever” (文化热) among literati beginning in the middle of the 1980ies. An emblematic work was the an essay titled *The Ugly Chinaman* (丑陋的中国人) by Taiwanese writer Guo Dingsheng commonly known under his pen name Boyang (柏杨) first published in

Taiwan in 1985 and republished in the PRC the following year. Boyang in this essay decried the „spiritual“ ugliness of the Chinese, still selfish and egocentric. Chinese culture, for Boyang, was but “soy paste jar” (酱缸), containing rancid stew. (Mitter, 2004, pp. 262-263) Another, much more widely circulated, intellectual challenge to “Chineseness” was the TV series “*heshang*” (河殇), translated as “Deathsong of a River” or “River Elegy”. The TV series caught immense public interest. Rana Mitter reckons it to be the single most-watched documentary in the history of television, although it was aired only twice in 1988. (Mitter, 2004, p. 264) The highly symbolic, polemic documentary contrasted Chinese culture represented by the yellow colour of the Chinese soil and the water of the Yellow River as a backward, captive world with the Western world represented by the blue ocean as an advanced, free world. *Heshang* clearly was a political statement for “wholesale Westernisation” (全盘西化) (Tu, 1991, p. 302) and was condemned and prohibited after the suppression of the Tian’anmen movement in 1989.

The protests were much more complex than the rebellious, “freedom”-seeking youth that remained ingrained in public memory, as many people on Tian’anmen Square and other squares and campuses across China demanded rule of law, procedural democracy, freedom of speech without denouncing their Chinese identity. But on a cultural level, the importance of the protests lay in their atmosphere of denial of Chineseness, as it was propagated by the CCP after reform and opening up. The CCP having placed its founding myth in the May 4th Movement of 1919, which just as much questioned Chinese culture as a nation, had to look with terror at the June 4th Movement, able to question not only CCP legitimacy but the Chineseness it declaredly had been founding itself on for the preceding decade.

The Nobel peace price laureate Liu Xiaobo (刘晓波), one of the most prominent leaders of the student movement, grasped this spirit in his writings and continually carried it on through extreme confrontational hardship.

这个民族

惯于把坟墓记忆成宫殿

在有奴隶主之前

我们已经学会了

怎样下跪才最优美

this nation

used to turning the memories of tombs into palaces

confronted with the slave-owner

we have already learnt successfully

how to kneel in front of him most pleasingly. (Liu, 2009)

E.P. Thompson and Scott observe that “the very process of attempting to legitimate a social order by idealizing it [...] provides its subjects with the means, the symbolic tools, the very ideas for a critique” (E.P. Thompson, Jim Scott quoted in (Shue, 2004, p. 28)) and the students used those very symbolic tools and ideas to criticise the élite in power. L.H.M. Ling looked into State violence in Chinese politics and identified two sets of discourse repeatedly appearing in the moments of greatest dissent in the 20th century (Hundred Days Reform, May 4th Movement, 1989). One used by State élite and the other used by dissenters: “Angry parents” vs. “injured children”:

State élite	Dissenters
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The parent-state is all-knowing and cares for its children-subjects	Children-subjects are suffering from neglect and abuse
Whatever dissent that arises must come from irresponsible malcontents	Neglect and abuse is due to corrupt and evil officials
The parent-state has the obligation to remove these deviants from society and restore order	The state has a moral obligation to eliminate these deviants from power and restore parental governance

(Ling, 1994, pp. 399-400)

Given the Confucian filial basis of the understanding of state-society relations, Ling argues, dissents moral suasion tactics originally designed to resolve family conflicts, transfer to the political area and are highly emotional appeals to the rectification of conscience (Ling, 1994, p. 399).

This analysis, while patronising on the surface, does not reflect the validity of claims made by protesters, but rather the discursive methods adopted.

“The student’s progression from playfulness to moralizing, to shaming the government, to acting as a more righteous government was a sequence that could not have been better designed to cause maximum pain for the Chinese leaders.” (Pye, 1990, p. 347)

The movement’s failure led to continued CCP pragmatism, but caused a lot of thinking on how “Chineseness” can be represented by the CCP.

Nationalism - including its assertion abroad - emerged as a driving force of CCP legitimacy and once again falling back on representing foreign relations to the Chinese audience along the long-tested lines of political Confucianism. Guang Lei observes that “realpolitik and nationalism are often taken to represent two distinct kinds of historical forces shaping the destinies of nations: the former is characterized by level-headed and steadfast attention to national interests; the latter is evocative of powerful normative, and often irrational, beliefs. (Guang, 2005, p. 498)

As the then Foreign Minister Qian Qichen (钱其琛) in a 1990 article stated, “diplomacy is the extension of internal affairs” (Zhao, 1992, p. 159). The ultimate challenge of the last twenty years thus became to be on top of the - powerful normative, and often irrational - beliefs of nationalism and provide a Confucian “moral” framework to it, making assertions in foreign policy based on nationalist interests not look “hegemonic” but rather “rightful”. Nationalism in China, in Vivienne Shue’s words, had to equal “Truth, Benevolence, and Glory” (Shue, 2004, p. 24). These were the interests pursued by a declared pragmatism.

For Shue, “Truth, Benevolence, and Glory” are “the very most important constitutive concepts in the complex constellation of Chinese thought relating to state power and to legitimacy” and thus deserve more detailed attention. (Shue, 2004, p. 31)

In regards to Truth, Shue argues that the tradition function of the state to uphold a moral order in accordance with the cosmic order through education and the reduction of heterodoxy survived in the general perception of the legitimacy of government in China. (Shue, 2004, p. 31) Of course, the orthodox of today is no more the orthodoxy of the past and is pronounced in terms of scientific rationalism and pragmatic empiricism. “Scientific knowledge and technical know-how are presented by the state [...] as morally sound and good because, through science and technology, modernization will be achieved.” (Shue, 2004, p. 33)

In regards to Benevolence, the PRC raised the standard of living for a large majority of the Chinese population since reform and opening up and repeatedly reiterates this argument as an answer to Western accusations of abuse of civil and political rights. The epic representation of the rescue work after the Wenchuan earthquake on May

12th 2008 and a 2010 state-funded blockbuster movie “Aftershock” (唐山大地震) praising the role of the People’s Liberation Army after the Tangshan earthquake on July 26th 1976 are two examples in case.

“Glory”, says Shue, “came to be understood no longer primarily in terms of civilised behaviour and cultural florescence, but in the more vulgarly material terms of ‘wealth and power’. Tributes and other polite forms of ritualised respect from foreign powers would remain [...] extremely important to 20th and 21st century Chinese rulers. (Shue, 2004, p. 33) Expression of outrage over the “humiliation” of Chinese Glory in several occasions³³ throughout the last decade of the 20th century and the first of the 21st century forced the Chinese government to actively manage nationalist sentiment. The 1990ies witnessed a transformation from containing these expressions of outrage to a first tentative moment of publicly endorsing these “patriotic” demonstrations and “firmly supporting and protecting all legal protest activities”, as then Vice-President Hu Jintao (胡锦涛) declared in a televised speech condemning the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by NATO forces on May 7th, 1999. (Zheng, 2000, pp. 103-104) One year before the embassy bombing, professor Zhang Xudong still had observed, “the rising nationalist sentiment in the social sphere lacks any political-intellectual formulation at the national level. (Zhang, 1998, p. 118) That lack allowed for nationalism and its evocation of Glory to emerge first outside the institutions of the state. The bestseller collection of essays “China can say no: political and emotional choices in the post-Cold War era” (中国可以说

³³ American opposition in 1993 to the Beijing bid to host the Olympic Games of the year 2000, the Yinhe incident in 1993, the visit of the ROC President Lee Teng-hui to the US in 1995 and the ensuing 2nd Taiwan Straits Crisis, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute from 1996 onwards, the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade on May 7th, 1999, the EP3-incident on April 1st, 2001, the Anti-Japanese demonstrations in 2005, the Olympic Torch relay demonstrations and Tibetan unrest in early 2008, the Minjunyu 5179 incident on September 7th, 2010

不：冷战后时代的政治与情感抉择), published in 1996, on the international position of China was emblematic of the societal creation of the 1990ies Chinese nationalism. The comparative lack of success of the follow-up publication in 2009 “China is not happy: the great era, the great goals and our internal and external challenges” (中国不高兴：大时代，大目标及我们的内忧外患) shows that the State has successfully taken over the nationalism discourse in the meantime. Conclusively, two internal factors need to be mentioned, which complicate the government’s fulfilment of people’s demands of Truth, Benevolence and Glory on both sides of the equation. On the State’s side, China has witnessed a transition from “vertical to horizontal authoritarianism”. (Zhao, 1992, p. 158) Since Zhao Quansheng’s study on the matter, has all but become ever more complex and as incidents such as the anti-satellite missile test on January 11th, 2007 and or the disappearance of artist Ai Weiwei (艾未未) on April 3rd, 2011 prove, show moments of great incoherence and internal lack of communication.

On the people’s side, the massive increase in Internet usage in Mainland China and the inability of the central and the regional governments to contain the “new online public sphere” (Shen & Breslin, 2010, p. 4) has created a new challenge in containing and leading nationalist sentiment. According to Sow’s recent study on online nationalism, Chinese nationalism entered the virtual space around the time of the 1999 Belgrade embassy bombing and gradually reflected a rising confidence in China’s role in the world throughout the following decade. For Sow, Chinese online nationalism is now retreating from a focus on great power rivalry (vs. the US, Japan) and reflecting “a form of new optimism and loud confidence”. (Sow, 2010, p. 29)

10.2. Return of Declared CCP-Confucianism and its Transformation into a Soft Power Asset

“Overnight, what had hitherto been viewed as an obstinate obstacle to Chinese modernity was transformed into a dynamic force of modernity for others to emulate” (Dirlik, 1995, p. 236)

The beginnings return to declared Confucianism has to be understood as part of a wider culture-fever (文化热) in China throughout the 1980ies. The essence of “culture” and its relationship to modernity was widely discussing in study groups all over the newly stately “pragmatic” People’s Republic (Lee, 1998, p. 237). Two book series on that very relationship, *Towards the Future* (走向未来) by Jin Guantao (金观涛) and *Culture: China and the World* (文化： 中国与世界) Gan Yang (甘阳), received widespread attention. The “root seeking” literature movement (寻根派), named after the article *The Roots of Literature* (文学的根) by Han Shaogong (韩少功) explored native cultural traits to understand Chineseness in new native terms. As discussed, some led the reconsideration of native identity to condemn it in its entirety (*beshang*), some used native tools to attack power and eventually, native identity, most prominently Confucianism, also became the new cement for the foundations of CCP rule.

A first Conference on Confucianism was held in 1978 at Peking University. The Neo-Confucian Feng Youlan returned to his pre-1949 Confucian ideals in the first volume of his *New History of Chinese Philosophy* (中国哲学史), published in 1982, and this turn received wide-spread attention. (Bresciani, 2001, p. 421) In 1984, on the

rather frail pretext of the occasion of the 2535th birthday of Confucius, the semi-governmental “China Confucius Foundation” (中国孔子基金会) was established under the State Council in Beijing. One year later, Peking University established the “International Academy on Chinese Culture” (中国文化书院). In the same year Harvard Professor Du Weiming (杜维明), a student of Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan, was visiting professor at the university. Du Weiming views Confuciansim as an “ethico-spiritual” system of values, comparable to Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, but secular. He once described “humanistic socialism” as his “choice of political belief” and Confucianism was “his choice of religion”. (Dirlik, 1995, p. 255) His lectures on the Confucian value system³⁴ received remarkable attention; his lectures were immediately published to satisfy the academic interest in Confucius. (Dirlik, 1995, p. 238) Princeton Professor Yu Yingshi (余英时), student to Qian Mu, also taught in China advocating the compatibility of Confucianism with liberal values. (Bresciani, 2001, p. 395)

Umberto Bresciani tells of a scholarly meeting on central government level in March 1986, in which philosophy professor Fang Keli (方克立) from Nankai University in Tianjin laments the lack of study of Neo-Confucianism in China, listing it as one of the three major currents of thought in China since the May 4th movement, the others being communism and liberalism. (Bresciani, 2001, p. 424) Forty-seven scholars

³⁴ For Du Weiming, „East Asian modernity under the influence of Confucian traditions presents a coherent social vision with at least six salient features“: (1) Government leadership in a market economy is not only necessary but desirable; (2) although law is the essential minimum requirement for social stability, „organic solidarity can only result from humane rites of interaction; (3) Family as the basic unit of society; (4) Civil society flourishes because its strength lies in its dynamic interplay between family and state; (5) Education should be the “civil religion of society”; (6) The quality of life of a society depends on the level of self-cultivation of its members. (Tu, 2003, pp. 272-273) Democracy in East Asia, according to Du, “more than the electoral culture” and includes “bureaucratic meritocracy, educational elitism and particularistic social networking” (Tu, 2003, p. 276)

under the supervision of Fang and a colleague were assigned by the Ministry of Education to form the “Study Task Force on the Ideological Trends of Modern Neo-Confucianism” (现代新儒学思潮研究课题组). (Geng, 2010, p. 7) A preliminary result was published at a first conference in Xuanzhou, Anhui, in 1987 paving the way for putting Confucianism back at the centre of political discourse:

The Contemporary Neo-Confucian Movement was born in this century in the 1920s, up to our day it is still full of life; they consider their responsibility the continuation of the orthodox line and the renaissance of Confucianism; their main characteristic is to follow Neo-Confucianism of the Song and Ming Dynasties [...]; their aim is to absorb and combine, having Confucianism as essence and base, Western Learning, in order to develop a school of thought working for the modernization of China. (Fang quoted in (Bresciani, 2001, pp. 424-425))

A first collection of essays of the study group was published in 1989. (Fang & Li, 1989) In 1989, shortly after the Tian'anmen Incident, Jiang Qing (蒋庆), a mainland scholar teaching at the Shenzhen Institute of Government, published *The Actual Meaning of the Renaissance of Confucianism in Mainland China and the Issues It Encounters* (中国大陆复兴儒学哲学的现实意义及其面临的问题) in two editions of the Neo-Confucian journal *Legein Society* (鹅湖) in Taipei, Taiwan. For Jiang, Confucianism, having “reached the crucial moment of its returning home and regaining its leading position” will bring moral standards to Chinese politics. (Bresciani, 2001, p. 429) In 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1994 the China Confucius Foundation organised international conferences in Beijing and Confucius' hometown Qufu, Shandong. At

the 1994 conference the „International Confucian Association“ (国际儒学联合会) was founded with Singapore’s then Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew (李光耀) as honorary president. High-level Party members such as the Vice-Premier Li Lanqing (李岚清) attended these conferences. Scholarly congresses were held to commemorate the late Neo-Confucians Xiong Shili (1985, Huanggang), He Lin (1986, Beijing), Liang Shuming (1987, Beijing), Tang Junyi (1988, Hong Kong) (Bresciani, 2001, p. 421). Lin Tongqi observes that in Mainland China alone, over one thousand articles on Confucianism were published in the 1980ies. (Dirlik, 1995, p. 238)

In 1992 Peking University established the Research Centre on Chinese Traditional Culture (中国传统文化研究中心), which was renamed to Research Institute for National Science (国学研究学院). Its journal *Studies in National Science* (国学研究) has been publishing extensively on Confucianism until today.

In 1993, shortly after the publication of Joseph Nye’s *Bound to Lead. The Changing Nature of American Power* in Chinese in 1992, professor Wang Huning (王沪宁), a then advisor to president Jiang Zemin (江泽民) published an article on the urgency of the strengthening of China’s soft power. In 1997, professor Pang Zhonying (庞中英) published an article explaining Nye’s theory in more detail. In 1999 professor Shen Jiru (沈骥如) in an editorial in the national weekly *Outlook Weekly* (瞭望周刊) called for the strengthening of China’s soft power. In the late 1990ies “comprehensive national power” (综合国力) emerged as a new understanding among Chinese scholars of the relative standing within the international system and the soft power concept fit well into that framework. Huang Shuofeng (黄硕风) in

his *Theory on Comprehensive National Power* (综合国力论), published in 1999, distinguished between hard power (economic, technological power), soft power (political, cultural and educational power) and coordinating power (decision-making, management capabilities). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' think-tank China Institute of International Studies (中国国际问题研究所) held a seminal conference on "The Importance and Influence of Soft Power in US Foreign Policy" in August 2002. (Young & Jong, 2008, pp. 456-457)

Confucius as a symbol and Confucian values as the cultural message to convey filled the void of soft power in a first form of internal "morality" (道德) riding the wave of great public interest in the Confucian classics. The 2001 *Outline of Implementation of National Morality* (国民道德实施纲要) and numerous central and regional Party meetings, most prominently Politburo collective seminar on "Development and Prosperity of Chinese Philosophy and Social Science" on May 13th, 2004 (Choo, 2009) reflect a pragmatic effort of infusing a semblance of traditional value-orientation into policy. The reappraisal of Confucian values on the political arena followed the public proclamation of the slogans "harmonious society" (和谐社会) and "harmonious world" (和谐世界), adopting the Confucian notion of harmony (和) from the Book of Rites (see chapter 10.3) domestically and for China's international relations. In domestic terms, according to a recent study, several hundred academic conferences on Confucianism have been held at universities around China in the last two decades. Confucianism Research Institutes and National Studies Institutes have been set up in at least ten national elite universities (Peking University, Tsinghua University, People's University, Shandong University, Wuhan

University, etc.). Innumerable “public forums” (讲坛) on Confucianism have been organised in every Chinese province and abroad by central and local government authorities. Public veneration rites at Confucius temples has recommenced in his hometown Qufu, Shandong, in 1990 and at the Southern Confucian Ancestral Temple in Quzhou, Zhejiang, (衢州孔氏南宗家庙) in 1993. (Wu, 2010, p. 22) Most recently, on September 28th, 2010 the anniversary of the birth of Confucius was celebrated at the Confucius temple in Beijing for the first time since the founding of the People’s Republic in a ceremony for high government and Party officials and foreign representatives. While the ceremony in Qufu is a public event, the ceremony in Beijing was closed to the public and placed under high security. (Straits Times, 2010) Confucius statues, but also statues of Confucian scholars such as Dong Zhongshu, Zhu Xi, Wang Yuanming etc. have appeared in most major cities. (Wu, 2010, pp. 22-23) Most prominently, an almost ten metre tall bronze Confucius statue was placed just next to Tian’anmen Square in January 2011 and for reasons so far not publicized furtively removed on April 22nd, 2011. (Jacobs, 2011)

In international terms, the Leading Small Group for Foreign Chinese Language Education was established under the State Council in 2004. The Small Group prepared the ground for the establishment of “Confucius Institutes” (孔子学院) administered by the Office of the Chinese Language Council International (usually referred to by its abbreviated Chinese name Hanban). These institutes, similar to the British Councils, Goethe Institutes, Cervantes Institutes run by European foreign ministries, should increase the cultural appeal of China abroad and thus strengthen Chinese soft power. On June 15th, 2004 a pilot institute was established in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. On November 21st, 2004 the first fully fledged Confucius Institute was

established in Seoul, South Korea. During 2006, a new Confucius Institute opened on average every four days. The initial target of 100 Confucius Institutes by 2010 was increased to over 330 by the end of 2009. In 2009 the target was again revised to 500 Confucius Institutes by the end of 2010 and 1000 by 2020. (Zhao & Huang, 2010, p. 129) By the end of 2010, Hanban according to its website supervised 332 Confucius Institutes and 369 Confucius Classrooms (孔子学堂, subordinate institutes) around the world.

Confucian symbols and the native brand “Confucius” is ever more present in State and Party political-cultural statements. The character for harmony, *he* (和), figured prominently at the Opening Ceremony of the 29th Olympic Games in Beijing on August 8th, 2008. A biographical film on Confucius was scheduled to screen to meet the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic and Confucius’ 2560th birthday in 2009, but was eventually released with delay in 2010.

On December 9th, 2010 an organisation under the Ministry of Culture awarded a newly created “Confucius Peace Price” to GMD-Honorary Chairman Lien Chan (连战) in a reaction to Liu Xiaobo being awarded the Nobel Peace Price in Oslo shortly before.

In retrospect, Confucius swiftly returned to play a central role in political discourse in mainland China first in academia and eventually because it met the ideological needs of the CCP. The Neo-Confucian scholar He Lin had observed and predicted the return and the use of Confucius in his 1988 late work *Culture and Life* (文化与人生):

任何一个现代的新思想,如果与过去的文化完全没有关系,便犹如无源之水,无本之木,绝不能源远流长、根深蒂固 (He, 1996, p. 4)

Every modern new thought, if it is completely detached from the past culture, it will be like water without a source, like a tree without roots, and will not be able to exist over a long time or ever be deep-rooted.

10.3. Harmonious Society - Harmonious World

喜怒哀乐之未发，谓之中，发而皆中节，谓之和，中也者，天下之大本也，和也者，天下之达道也，致中和，天地位焉，万物育焉

Pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy are not stirred, this is said to be in balance, the feelings stirred in due degree, this is said to be harmony, the balance is the root of all under heaven, the harmony is the path to pursue the *dao*, if balance and harmony are combined, heaven and earth will be in order and the myriad of things will flourish.

Beginning of the chapter *zhongyong* in the *Book of Rites*

以和邦国，以统百官，以谐万民

To keep the countries together through communal harmony, to keep the hundred officials together by unity, to keep the myriad of people together by coherent harmony.

Rites of the Zhou (周礼)

On October 24th, 1995 president Jiang Zemin probably was the first Chinese State leader to prominently use the term “harmonious” in a major speech. The term *hexie* is a term deeply linked to the Confucian understanding of a stable society and diametrically opposed to the Communist theory of class struggle as the means of advancement towards socialism. In 1995 Jiang spoke in occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations at the UN General Assembly in New York:

我们要造成自主选择、求同存异的国际和谐局面。世界上约有二百个国家，无论是社会制度、价值观念和发展程度，还是历史传统、宗教信仰和文化背景，都存在着差异。根据本国国情和自己的意愿选择社会制度和发展道路，是各国人民的主权，别人无权干涉。(Jiang, 1995)

We have to create a harmonious international situation characterised by autonomous choice, seeking commonalities while accepting diversity. On this world we have about 200 states, there persist differences be those in social system, values and development stage, or be those in the historical traditions, religious faith or cultural background. Every country has to be able to chose its social system and development path according to its own national sentiment and its own wishes, this is the sovereignty of the peoples of all states, noone has any right to interfere.

Jiang linked the global positive development to non-interference in internal affairs of third countries and respect for their cultural heritage and “national sentiment”.

In 2004, the report of the fourth plenary session of the 16th CCP Central Committee, now under the leadership of Hu Jintao, called for Party “to heighten its capacities the

construction of a socialist harmonious society” (不断提高构建社会主义和谐社会的能力) in China as a means to reach the goal of a moderately well-off society (小康社会) and the “renaissance of the great *zhonghua minzu*” (实现中华民族的伟大复兴). (Xinhua News Agency, 2004) President Hu transposed the concept to the international arena and called for the construction of “harmonious world” for the first time at the African-Asian Summit in Bandung, Indonesia, on April 22nd, 2005, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Bandung conference (Xiao, 2010, p. 113):

中国同推动建设和谐世界结合起来，共同推动一个爱好和平、讲信修睦、协和万邦的和谐而又具有充分活力的中华文明的复兴 (Xinhua News Agency, 2006b)

China combines with the creation of a harmonious world the promotion of the revival of the the Chinese civilization, which is harmonious in terms of peace-loving, promoting good will and making all nations live together peacefully and which is marked with vitality.

The term „harmonious society“ was included in the Joint Communiqué by China and Russia on occasion of Hu’s visit to Russia in July 2005. Ten years after Jiang’s speech at the UN, Hu referred to “harmonious society” in his speech for the 60th anniversary of the UN on September 15th, 2005:

让我们携手合作，共同为建设一个持久和平、共同繁荣的和谐世界而努力。 (Hu, 2005)

Let us join hands and work together to make efforts in building a harmonious world of lasting peace and shared prosperity.

On December 6th, 2005, prime minister Wen Jiabao (温家宝) also used the term in a speech to students in Paris. In a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo on Foreign Relations on August 23rd, 2006 it reportedly was decided that the purpose of China's "foreign affairs work" was to „contribute to the advancement of a harmonious world of lasting peace and shared prosperity (为推动建设持久和平、共同繁荣的和谐世界作出贡献). (Xinhua News Agency, 2006a) The 17th Party Congress in October 2007 approved revisions of the Party Constitution, one of which was the inclusion of the objective of establishing a "harmonious world" into the Party Constitution.

中国共产党坚持独立自主的和平外交政策，坚持和平发展道路，坚持互利共赢的开放战略，统筹国内国际两个大局，积极发展对外关系，努力为我国的改革开放和现代化建设争取有利的国际环境。在国际事务中，维护我国的独立和主权，反对霸权主义和强权政治，维护世界和平，促进人类进步，努力推动建设持久和平、共同繁荣的和谐世界。(CCP, 2007)

The Chinese Communist Party persists in a peaceful foreign policy characterised by independence and autonomy, persists in the path of peaceful development, persists in the strategy of opening up for mutual benefit, takes the national and international situations into account, positively develops its foreign relations, makes efforts to strive for a favourable international

environment for our nation's opening up and modernised construction. In international affairs, [the CCP strives for] the protection of our nation's independence and sovereignty, opposes hegemonism (*baquan zhu yi*) and power politics, protects world peace, advances the development of humanity, makes efforts in bringing forth a harmonious world of lasting peace and shared prosperity.

The inclusion into the Party Constitution as a *purpose* of the Communist Party implies that the Party leadership sees this claimed assumption of a global task as acceptable to the Chinese people and even, most probably, beneficial to its continued position in power. As a recent article in the Party Academy organ stated,

构建和谐世界—这一战略思维具有中国特色，也具有普世意义。

(Wang, 2011b, p. 100)

The construction of a harmonious world is a strategic thought with Chinese characteristics, but it also has a universal meaning.

While the “Harmonious World” concept has been continually used ever since by the central leadership to portray a benign nature of Chinese foreign policy to the outside and has been generally dismissed as a policy of vague platitudes. But these vague platitudes have served to portray the Chinese State in its present form as a global moral force, a global defender of diversity (Wang, 2011b, p. 99) and the potential guarantor of a just international order to its own people. Variations on the governmental interpretations of the steady theme of “harmonious world” will provide information not only on foreign policy justifications, but much more

important will reflect the government's readings of domestic public opinion on world events.

10.4. Zheng Bijian's Adoption of the "Rise of China"

With China's rise all but taken for granted, China's fourth generation leaders under Hu Jintao spoke of China's "peaceful rise" [...] The messages of these leaders were crystal clear: under the CCP's leadership, the Chinese nation had slowly, but surely, climbed out from the lowest point of its five-thousand-year history; the nation has finally come of age at the dawn of the twenty-first century. (Sow, 2010, p. 26)

Zheng Bijian (郑必坚), the propagator of the concept of China's "peaceful rise" has come to be considered one of the leading opinion-shapers within the CCP leadership. Zheng was born in 1932, studied political economics at People's University in Beijing. Upon graduation he worked on ideological issues in Central Committee departments. In the 1980s he served as secretary to the reformist General Secretaries of the CCP Hu Yaobang (胡耀邦) and Zhao Ziyang (赵紫阳). In 1988, he became president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and headed its Institute for Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. In 1992, he was elected to the Central Committee and worked in the Party's Propaganda Department on ministerial level. Zheng became the executive vice president of the Central Party School of the CCP in 1998, then headed by now president Hu Jintao (胡锦涛). Zheng, having reached the official retirement age of 70 in 2002, stepped down from his Party functions in

2002. He continues to be influential as chairman of the China Reform Forum and as member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. (Suettinger, 2004, pp. 1-2)

Zheng referred to the “peaceful rise of China” for the first time in a speech (*The 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and China's Peaceful Rise – A New Path*) at the Center of Strategic and International Studies in Washington D.C. on December 9th 2002. He used the term *heping jueqi* (和平崛起), first prominently used by IR scholar Yan Xuetong (阎学通) in the title of his book *The Rise of China – An Evaluation of the International Environment* (中国崛起—国际环境评估) published in 1998. Huang Renwei (黄仁伟) elaborated on Yan's book in his September 2002 publication *The Time and Space of the Rise of China* (中国崛起的时间和空间). (Niu, 2007, p. 102) Zheng Bijian's target audience at his Washington speech was not Chinese, but decidedly American advocates of the “China threat” theory. Zheng tried to dispel anxieties about the increasing Chinese assertiveness in the pursuit of economic interests. (Guo, 2006, p. 39) China was to achieve “balanced material, political, and spiritual cultures”, most importantly a “socialist political culture” proposed for the first time at the 16th Party Congress in 2002. Without defining it, he correctly observes, “having this framework target of building a political culture is totally different from not having it”. The goal of a new political culture, according to Zheng, is complimentary to achieving “all-round human development”. The 16th Party Congress adopted two principles to achieve these goals. On the domestic front, “it was decided to mobilize all positive factors in the most extensive and adequate manner to build on the forces for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”. On

the international front, China should “continue to expand open up”. (Zheng, 2005b, pp. 3-5)

In November 2003, Zheng spoke again prominently on the “peaceful rise” at the Bo’ao Forum for Asia, his audience this time predominantly being Chinese and from other Asian countries. In his speech “A new path for China’s peaceful rise and the future of Asia” he listed three “crucial strategic principles” for the “peaceful rise of China” (中国和平崛起): (1) “ensure institutional safeguards for our peaceful rise”; (2) “boldly draw on the fruit of all human civilisation while fostering the Chinese civilisation, to ensure cultural support for China’s peaceful rise”; (3) balance interests to secure a social, economic and environmental “coordinated development” (Zheng, 2005b, pp. 15-16).

The phrase turned from being the pet concept of an ideologue to a concept of real political weight when the Party leadership embraced it at the end of 2003. Prime minister Wen Jiabao (温家宝) referred to the “peaceful rise and development” again in front of a foreign audience at Harvard University on December 10th, 2003. The foreign Kremlinologists rejoiced when President Hu Jintao used the phrase in front of many members of Politburo Standing Committee and a larger audience at a workshop on the 110th anniversary of Mao Zedong’s birth on December 26th:

坚持这条道路，就要坚持中国共产党的领导和社会主义制度，坚持并在实践中不断完善有利于推动中国特色社会主义事业蓬勃发展的各方面的体制制度和方针政策，更好地实现社会主义现代化和中华民族的伟大复兴。坚持这条道路，就要坚持走和平崛起的发展道路，坚持在和平共处五项原则的基础上同各国友好相处，在平等互利的基础上积

极开展同各国的交流与合作，为人类和平与发展的崇高事业作出贡献。

(Hu, 2003)

To persist in this path, we have to persist in the socialist system under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, persist in the institutional systems and policies in every field, while in their realisation continuously seek improvements advantageous to the promotion of the vigorous development of the socialism with Chinese characteristics, in order to better realise the modernisation of socialism and the great task of the renaissance of the Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu de weida fuxing*). To persist in this path, we have to persist in following the development path of peaceful rise, persist in maintaining friendly relations with all countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence on the foundation of mutual respect and mutual interest, and contribute to the great cause of peace and development for all humanity.

Vibrant debate on the “peaceful rise” could be witness in the Chinese media, which generally very quickly adopted the concept. (Suettinger, 2004, p. 4)

In a “collective study” session of the Politburo in February 2004, Hu repeated his stance. On March 14th, prime minister Wen Jiabao outlined “five essentials” of the peaceful rise: (1) safeguard world peace through China’s development; (2) rely on own strength; (3) maintain openness, develop trade relations with friendly countries; (4) will take a long time to be realised; (5) “China today cannot be called a hegemony, and even when China will be stronger can never be called a hegemon.” (中国现在不称霸，将来强大了也永远不会称霸) (Wen, 2004)

Zheng organised a seminar on *China's Peaceful Rise and Economic Globalisation* at the Bo'ao Forum for Asia in April 2004 with a scheduled keynote speech by president Hu Jintao. In his own speech, Zheng saw “tremendous opportunities” in China’s culture and tradition, and its historical influence in the Asia-Pacific region. He admitted that “China’s peaceful rise will somewhat intensify competition in the region.” Keeping up with the moralist imperative of Chinese political discourse he added that “this competition is characterised by friendship, cooperation, mutual benefit, and a win-win ideal; it is not the competition of an arms build-up or competition for spheres of influence or hegemony”. (Zheng, 2005b, p. 22) He concludes, “our new paradigm firmly abandons the strategic framework in which big powers in the past vied for spheres of influence, engaged in military confrontation, or exported ideologies”. (Zheng, 2005b, p. 23) Surprisingly, Hu Jintao in his keynote speech did not use the phrase, his key slogan was “peace and development” (和平与发展). Successive speeches by the state leadership revolved around “peace and development”, any talk of the “rise” of China was left to the public and intellectual debate. While some conjure that the change in terms was a reflection of an ideological power struggle between Jiang Zemin’s and the Hu-Wen power factions within the Central Committee (Suettinger, 2004, pp. 4-6), it seems more likely that the leadership took note of the international anxieties about the “China rise” theory as a Chinese government admission of the validity of a “China threat” and substituted it with the less emotive term “peaceful development” (和平发展) used for the first time abroad during Hu Jintao’s state visit to the United Kingdom in November 2005. (Choo, 2009, p. 397)

In looking back, it seems startlingly that the contemporary observers missed the duality of the message of the “China rise” speeches. On the one hand, of course, it emphasised the essential “peacefulness” of China to foreigners as they worry about the growing economic and political influence of authoritarian China on the world in general and her neighbours in particular. On the other hand, more importantly, the “China rise” speeches were expressions of “Glory” for the Chinese audience. This is why it was much more important as a pronounced concept, rather than as the systematic theory it certainly was not from its onset. Zhen Bijian published an article on Foreign Affairs magazine’s September/October 2005 issue on *China’s Peaceful Rise to Great Power Status* listing three great challenges the Chinese government faces before 2050 and the strategies it recurs to in dealing with those challenges. The three challenges are: (1) a shortage of resources, (2) environmental degradation, (3) lack of coordination between economic and social development. The three strategies, he refers to them as “transcendences”, are (1) to transcend the old model of industrialization, (2) to transcend the traditional way of the emergence of great powers and “Cold War mentality” (“China will transcend ideological differences to strive for peace, development, and cooperation with all countries of the world”), (3) to transcend outdated models of social control and to construct a harmonious socialist society. (Zheng, 2005a, p. 22)

The “China rise” theory has continued to shape the identity of China within international relations discourse and continues to be used in publication titles of the most renowned international relations scholars like Yan Xuetong, Huang Renwei, Niu Jun (牛军), Kang Shaogang (康绍邦) and Gong Li (宫力) and allows for research to study these understandings of the concept. Young and Jong sum up the

transformation of Chinese foreign policy in light of the “peaceful rise” theory in three ways:

- (1) Transition from an American-centred diplomacy towards a neighbour-centred diplomacy
- (2) Transition from working for admission in international society towards undertaking global leadership
- (3) Transition from an emphasis on economic development towards a more overall enhancement of “comprehensive national power”. (Young & Jong, 2008, p. 466)

On December 25th, 2005 the State Council published the white paper *China's path to Peaceful Development* (中国的和平发展道路) explaining peaceful development as (1) inevitable path for China's modernisation, (2) dependent upon a peaceful global environment, (3) dependent upon internal innovation and continuing opening up, (4) leading towards shared international development, (5) strives towards a harmonious world of sustained peace and common prosperity. (Young & Jong, 2008, p. 468)

According to Choo's analysis, the white paper is characterised by the traditional Chinese globalism assigning to the Chinese state a moral global purpose. The white paper, says Choo, pronounced three ways of combining national and international development: (1) unifying Chinese domestic development and opening to the outside world; (2) relating China's development to that of the world; (3) integrating Chinese people's fundamental interests to the common concern of the world people. “In sum, the White Paper emphasizes, China's own development promotes world peace and development, and by relying on itself and adhering to reform efforts, it creates a win-

win situation for co-prosperity and perpetual peace thereby enhancing the prospect for a harmonious world” (Choo, 2009, p. 397)

10.5. “China Model” and “Civilisation State” in Zhang Weiwei’s populist writings

The term “Beijing Consensus” (北京共识) was created by Joshua Cooper Ramo, a British professor at Tsinghua University, in an English-language research report (*The Beijing Consensus. Notes on the new physics of Chinese power*) published in May 2004 at the Foreign Policy Centre in London to suggest the existence of a Chinese alternative to the “Washington Consensus” on development. The Chinese version of the report was published with the title *The Beijing Consensus: Providing a New Model* (北京共识：提供新模式). It has to been regarded as a starting point of the “China Model” discourse.

Ramo’s Beijing Consensus consists of three theorems: (1) China’s development model is based on innovation; (2) China’s development model considers sustainability and equality as top priorities; (3) China strives for self-determination in foreign policy (Ramo, 2004) Alike the Washington Consensus, it defined development not only economic but also political and social term, most importantly it saw itself to be more effective and practical for developing countries. For Young and Jong, “Ramo’s Beijing Consensus has nothing new to offer, [...] it sounds more like a proxy measure to propagate China’s official stance”. (Young & Jong, 2008, p. 462) More relevant is the extensive media coverage Ramo’s report received in China,

it being portrayed as a realisation of a Western scholar that China has developed a development model that is universally applicable.

On the occasion of the China-Africa Summit (“Forum in China-Africa Cooperation” 3rd ministerial conference, Beijing, November 3rd to 5th 2006) Zhang Weiwei (张维为), professor at Tsinghua and Fudan universities, research fellow at the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, and former interpreter to Deng Xiaoping, contrasted the “Chinese model” (中国模式) to the “American model” of development in an International Herald Tribune article. For Zhang, “many of the African leaders coming [to Beijing] are attracted not only by opportunities for aid and trade, but also by the Chinese model of development”. For Zhang, the Chinese model has been more effective than the American model, which is “largely ideology driven, with a focus on mass democratisation”. America, according to Zhang leads by “lectures and sanctions, if not missiles”, whereas “China leads by example”. He predicts, “the Chinese model will become more appealing to the world’s poor.” (Zhang, 2006) This populist account is consistent in content with the “China rise” discourse; its only but significant alteration is the statement of the universal validity of Chinese system. Zhang continued to publish on the “China model”, most prominently in *China touches the World* (中国触动全球) published in 2008, and the concept has become to be widely used in Chinese academia. Peking University organised a symposium on *60 Years of the People’s Republic and the China Model* (人民共和国 60 年与中国模式) in December 2008, in which leading scholars from various fields debated the relevance of the term. (Zhi & Zang, 2009, p. 140)

On October 1st, 2009 (the day of 60th anniversary of the founding of the PRC) Zhang published an op-ed in the New York Times on “eight ideas behind China’s success”. He states that while “critics of China like to claim that despite its economic success, the country has no ‘big ideas’ to offer”, to his mind “it is precisely big ideas that have shaped China’s dramatic rise. (Zhang, 2009) He lists eight ideas: (1) “Facts rather than ideological dogmas should serve as the ultimate criterion for identifying truth”, i.e. Deng Xiaoping’s dogma of “seeking truth from facts”; (2) “Primacy of people’s livelihood”, stating that “this idea may have lasting implications for the world’s poor”; (3) Focus on “holistic thinking”, because of long-term policies not obfuscated by short-term political goals; (4) “Government as a necessary virtue”; (5) “Good governance matters more than democratization”; (6) “Performance legitimacy”; (7) “Selective learning and adaptation”; (8) “Harmony in diversity”. (Zhang, 2009) To the non-Chinese audience of the New York Times, the points Zhang makes are not those of a scientist, but rather of an ideologue defending his country’s deficiencies by pointing to its uniqueness. In China, Zhang has been making the same points in over seventy scholarly articles since around 2002 and has been gaining ever more widespread attention. The “China Model” phrasing has been adopted by other scholars such as Pan Wei (潘维), Li Junru (李君如), Wang Huiyao (王辉耀), Ding Xueliang (丁学良) and Wang Shaoguang (王绍光).

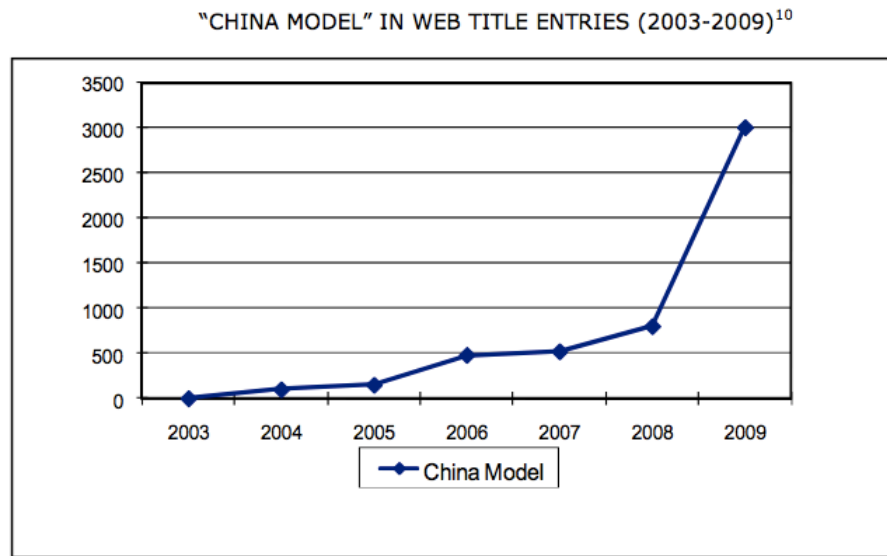


Figure 3 (Pan, 2010, p. 11)

In December 2009, Central Compilation and Translation Press in Beijing published a collection of essays titled *The China Model: Reading 60 Years of the People's Republic of China* (中国模式—解读人民共和国的 60 年) edited by Pan Wei, featuring contributions by renowned scholars working in government, Party and academia. In April 2010, an editorial *The Chinese Model is the 'least bad' model* (中国模式是‘最不坏’的模式) by Zhang was printed in the influential national business bi-weekly *Caijing*. He argues that the “traditional Western model” has proven incapable of solving many international problems such as the eradication of poverty and cultural conflicts. China has developed, says Zhang, its own proposition to deal with these problems and reiterates the eight ideas, he has been proposing for the previous years. He continues to list four achievements by the China Model since 1978: (1) the rapid rise of China; (2) the overall improvement in people's lives; (3) enormous changes in the structure of Chinese society; (4) the very creation of the China Model reflecting China's unique “national sentiment” (国情). Thus Zhang's populist argumentation

lacks basic logical coherence, but this very incoherence reflects the level of emotionality of the discourse. Zhang continues,

西方模式现在是故步自封。中国模式很多方面形成的震动，外国人都
会感到。我们办奥运会的方法，办残奥会的方法，还有即将举办世博
的方法，我们同非洲的关系，这些经过中国模式一处理就变成新的坐
标。尽管这个坐标可能也有缺点，也有问题，但是西方还是受到了震
撼，他知道还有这样一种玩法。(Zhang, 2010)

The Western model is but complacent and conservative. The tremors caused
by the creation of the Chinese model, all foreigners have felt them. Our way
of hosting the Olympics, [our] way of hosting the Paralympics, and soon [our]
way of hosting the World Expo, our relations with Africa, these have become
new coordinates after being handled according to the Chinese model. Even
though these coordinates have their deficiencies, have problems, but they still
left the West feel dumbfounded, [the West now] knows there is another way
of [dealing with issues].

In January 2011, Zhang published *China shocks: the Rise of a 'Civilisation State'* (中国震撼: 一个“文明型国家”的崛起) by converging his previous writings. (Zhang, 2011a) Three editorials³⁵ published on the April 11th, 2011 edition of the most eminent central government newspaper People's Daily (人民日报) praised the book for its appeal for new confidence in China.

³⁵ by Li Junru (Member of the Standing Committee of the CCPCC, former head of the CCP Central Party School); Cheng Enfu (Member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Head of the Department for Marxist Studies); Zhang Xiaolin (Editor-in-Chief of the CCP mouthpiece magazine Qiushi)

Zhang most recently spoke at the ceremony celebrating the centenary of Tsinghua University summing up his theory. According to Zhang, China is the only surviving “civilisation state” characterized by four “ultras” (四个超): ultra-vast population (超大型的人口规模), ultra-vast territory (超大型的疆域国土), ultra-long historical traditions (超悠久的历史传统), ultra-rich cultural heritage (超深厚的文化积淀). Moreover, this unique civilisation-state is characterised by eight distinguishing features (1) guided by practical reason, (2) strong government, (3) priority to stability, (4) prioritization of the people’s livelihood, (5) gradual reform, (6) sequential differentiation, (7) blended economy, (8) opening to the outside world. If China would switch to the to the Western model, then the four ultras advantageous to China within its own development path, would cause China to collapse. As a civilisation with five thousands years of history, the China Model transcends the Western dichotomy of democracy and dictatorship. They are but a product of a “McDonalds” culture incomparable with China’s eminent *bada caixi* culture (the eight cuisines of China). “The Chinese civilisation thus cannot collapse, it can only strive towards greater glory.” He concludes,

我个人认为，今天中国人在自己土地上所进行的探索是人类历史上最具开创性的事业，我们的眼光早就超越了西方模式，我们瞄准的是下一代的政治制度、经济制度和社会制度。中国模式通过中国人的努力会深刻的影响甚至一定程度上改变人类的未来。(Zhang, 2011b)

It is my opinion, that the quest undertaken Chinese people on their own territory is mankind’s most pioneering enterprise, our vision has long exceeded the Western model, what we are aiming at is the next generations

political system, economic system, and social system. Through the hard work of the Chinese people the Chinese model will profoundly influence and to a certain extent change the future of mankind.

10.6. Zhao Tingyang's Post-International World Order

当中国要思考整个世界的问题，要对世界负责人，就不能对世界无话可说。(Zhao, 2005, p. 2)

China has to consider the issue of the entire world and has to take responsibility for the world, [because China] cannot afford to have nothing to say to the world.

Zhao Tingyang (赵汀阳), born in 1961, is a native of Shantou in Guangdong province. He had already gained a reputation as a philosopher with works on aesthetics and one bestseller work *On possible life* (论可能生活) published in 1994. He has been teaching inter alia at China's most prestigious academic institutions Peking University, Tsinghua University, People's University and is now a member of the Philosophy Department of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. In 2003 he published his first collection of essays in which he develops a utopian world titled *A world without worldview* (没有世界观的世界). (Zhao, 2003) His 2005 book *Tianxia System: An Introduction to the Philosophy of a World Institution* (天下体系：世界制度哲

学导论) immediately again became a national bestseller. The book itself, while elegantly written, originates from two conference papers and is repetitive and rather unsystematic. In the meantime he has published at least two English language articles with a clearer representation of his thought. (Zhao, 2006), (Zhao, 2009a) His article *The concept of 'tianxia' and the world system* ('天下概念'与世界制度) is the first chapter of the standard undergraduate textbook on international relations of Peking University. (Zhao, 2007) He most recently elaborated on his *tianxia* concept in *Investigations on a Bad World: Political Philosophy as a First Philosophy* (坏世界研究：作为第一哲学的政治哲学) (Zhao, 2009b) His theory has had a huge impact on the Chinese community of IR scholars, who have been working on coming up with a native Chinese model of IR study as an alternative to the Westphalian system for several years. (Zhang, 2010, p. 110) For Ren Qian (任倩) from Sichuan University in Chengdu, "his *tianxia* theory helps China advance her soft power, heightens the persuasiveness of some foreign policies, but helps most for China to stand on her feet while Western countries promote [their] international [public] law." For Ren Qian, he achieved to turn the Chinese understanding of the world order into a domestic political patriotic act (国内政治中的爱国行为) and put China once again in the centre [of the world order]. (Ren, 2010, p. 256)

For his CASS colleague Zhou Fangyin (周方银), Zhao in his works „reflects a kind of heartfelt thoughts (心声) of Chinese scholars, and to a certain extent also even reflects a strong desire (强烈的愿望) among Chinese scholars. (Zhou, 2008, p. 99)

For Zhao, „empire is not only a geographical but also a cultural institutional concept“ that returns to having validity as the Westphalian system has come to be weakened through globalisation. (Zhao, 2006, p. 29)

Building on this perception, Zhao juxtaposes the Western concept of the modern “empire” to the Chinese concept of *tianxia*, whereas the first is an expression of a successfully expansionist nation-state, *tianxia* is “an institutional world” in which nations/states have come to be substituted by a “world/society”. (Zhao, 2006, p. 30)

For Zhao, the present international order is a “non-world” (非世界) based on the supreme value (sovereignty) of singular entities. Failed states are but expressions of a “failed world” (无效世界) and reflect the inaptitude of the Westphalian system in dealing with mankind’s problems. (Zhao, 2007, p. 4) Thus *tianxia* has to be realised on three levels. (1) the geographical world, (2) the psychological world, (3) the political world. *Tianxia* has to cover the entire world territory, but also on a spiritual level carry the assent of the entire world population (民心) and has be embodied by a world institutional system (世界制度) securing the “values of *tianxia*”. (Zhao 2007@12). This international system is different in essence from the United Nations, because the latter works on the basis of the “inter-nationality” of the Westphalian system and can only be seen as a weak “agora without a polis”. (Zhao, 2007, pp. 31-32) He accuses “ideologies”, i.e. communism, Christianity and capitalism with their universalistic aspirations to be but expressions of spiritual imperialism not comparable with his higher aspiration of a *tianxia* world containing all cultural differences. (Zhao, 2007, p. 33) The ideal for the future world system, according to Zhao, is the world system Chinese dynasties have strived towards establishing or pretended to have established. In the times of the Zhou dynasty, continues Zhao,

“China had been an ‘ideal’ empire, close to the concept of All-under-Heaven, consisting of many ‘sub-states’, independent in their economies, military powers and cultures, but politically and ethically dependent on the empire’s institutional centre”, the Son of Heaven. (Zhao, 2006, p. 34) In his article *Debating China’s Future*, he states in regards to China:

“In the end, even the Zhou dynasty fell, perhaps a victim of its own idealism.” (Zhao, 2008) In Zhao’s interpretation, with the unification of China through the Qin “the *legal tributary system* had [been] transformed into the *voluntary tributary system*, in which foreign countries volunteered to decide whether to join. (Zhao, 2006, p. 35), italics are the author’s). This voluntary adherence to the tributary system was based on the practice of the Confucian principle of benevolence (仁) and as a corollary the persistence of harmony (和谐) within this “world”. Thus the Chinese *tianxia* is fundamentally different from the Western ideological universalism, because it attracts and doesn’t impose itself. (Zhao, 2006, p. 36)

In his 2009 book he elaborates on his theory, principally adding two strategies to achieve his utopian ideal arguing in terms of game theory: (1) “common imitation”, (2) “Confucian improvement”. “Common imitation” is key to the establishment of shared institutions and basically is a modern way of referring for the traditional Chinese practice of rites as a demonstration of adherence to the system. “Confucian improvement” is his alternative to “Pareto improvement” (allocation of a resource to a set of individuals leading to the improvement of the situation of at least one individual, but not the deterioration of the situation of those not affected.) For Zhao, Confucian improvement means that the “world institution” prioritises the interests

of the “world” over factional interests, and thus leads to win-win (or lose-lose) situations for all. (Zhao & Huang, 2010, p. 110)

And who is to underwrite *tianxia* – a system that rejects the very notion of a ‘chosen state’? Though originally a Chinese concept, China itself would seek no more than to be a part of any such system that might spring from it.” (Zhao, 2008)

William Callahan, probably the Western scholar to have paid most attention to Zhao Tingyang’s writings, asks, “While Zhao understandably criticizes the West for universalizing its particular worldview at the considerable expense of other worldviews, is he doing anything different?” (Callahan, 2008, p. 756) Rather than seeing Zhao’s contribution as unique, he sees it as exemplary for a broader discussion of how China will be a world power and an effort by Chinese scholars to provide native resources to the understanding of China within the world. (Callahan, 2008, p. 757) Callahan rightfully concludes that “rather than give us a guide towards a utopian world order that will solve global problems, Tianxia is an example of the workings of normative power, in the sense that it re-centres Chinese understandings of world order a patriotic activity in domestic politics. (Callahan, 2008, p. 759)

His textbook message to the undergraduate élite students of Peking University, he concludes

当然，今天的世界可能不在需要帝国了：既不需要一个美国那样的危险帝国，可能也不需要中国古代天下帝国那样的和平帝国。但是，天下体系很有可能通过各种转换而成为适合于未来的世界制度。（Zhao, 2007, p. 35)

Of course, today’s world perhaps does not need an empire any more: neither does it need a dangerous empire like the American one, perhaps it doesn’t

need a peaceful empire like the Chinese one. But the *tianxia* system most likely through all kinds of conversions will be suitable to the future world system. (Zhao, 2006, p. 35)

11. Conclusion

In a first step, I tried to trace the concept of “ideology” from its creation in post-revolutionary France to Marx to post-marxist social theory, Castoriadis’ concept of the social imaginary, to post-modernism and the End of History theory and recent reformulations of the original Marxian concept. The social imaginary as the *vis formandi* of social collectives is intimately linked to universalistic moral values in general and collective notions of statehood in particular. Empire as the politicisation of a worldview builds on this very assumed validity of values part of the social imaginary. The erosion, or illusion, of the Westphalian system of equal states with absolute sovereignty has come to be questioned in the last two decades not only in academia. “Legitimate” political and military interference by the “world community” in state sovereignty for the sake of enforcement of universal values have come to relegate state sovereignty to a still prominent, but secondary position on the still inter-national level. While these values are not put into question here, this thesis looks into how the speakers of the Chinese elite has been dealing with the ongoing rethinking of sovereignty not for the sake of rethinking sovereignty, but rather to adhere to what is “imagined” to be the native collective vision of world-order China is part of. The analysis of the Confucian political imaginary in this thesis is thus not a historical or IR analysis on “imperialist” tendencies of a rising China. It is a tentative politological analysis of how the Confucian political imaginary has influenced discourse in recent Chinese history and how this Confucian political imaginary influences the political discourse of those seeking to maintain (and those seeking to erode) the legitimacy of rule of the Communist Party of China today.

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13. Curriculum Vitae

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